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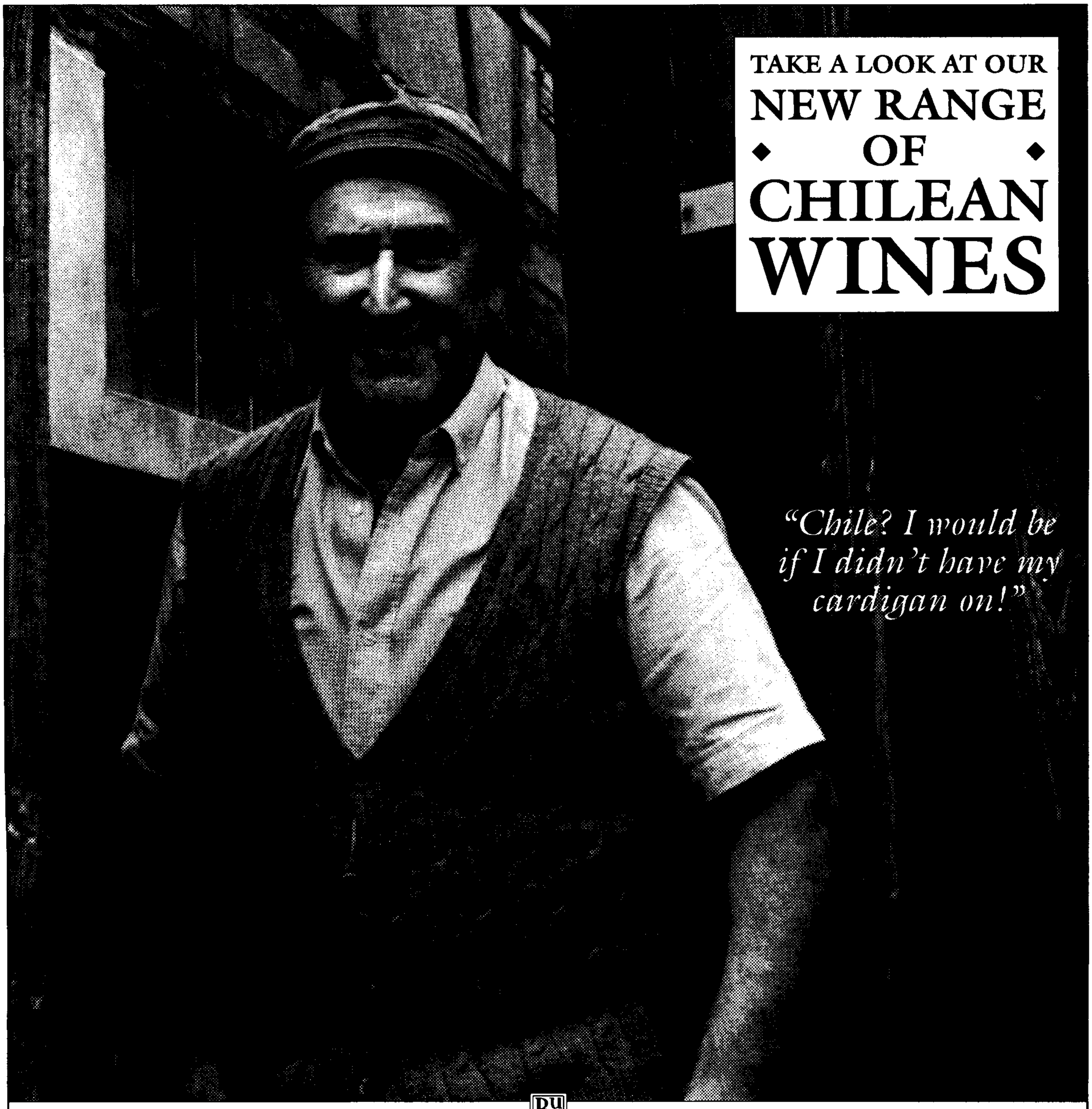

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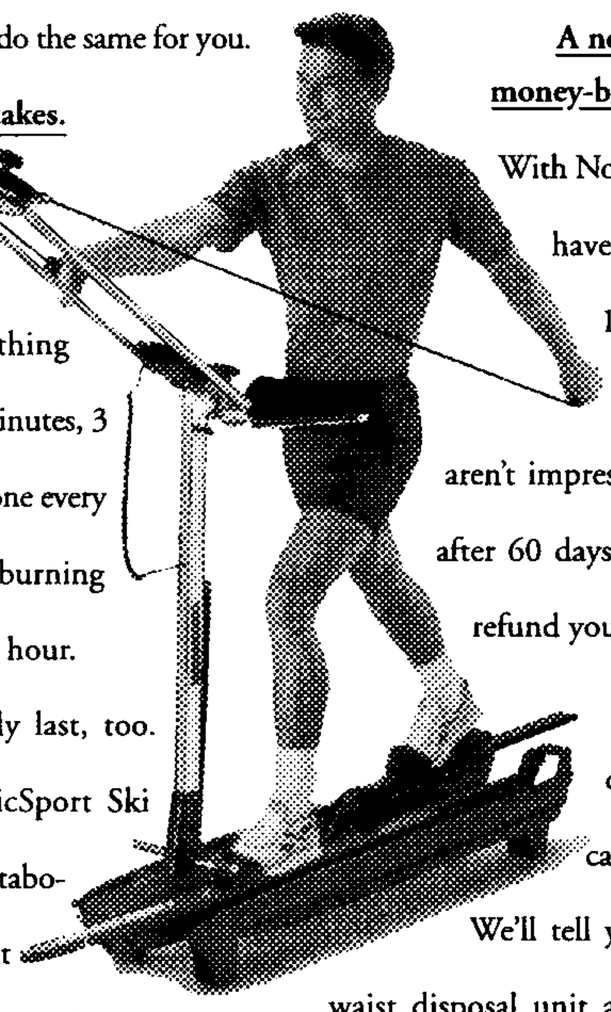

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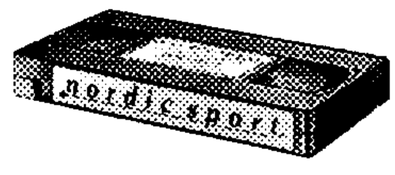
Send for your free brochure and video now.



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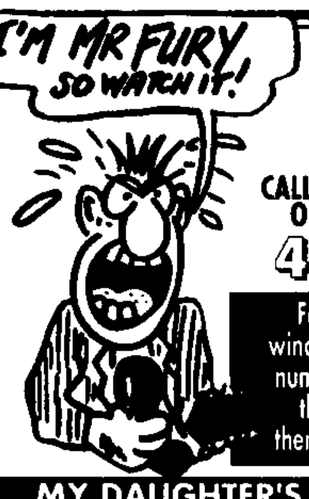

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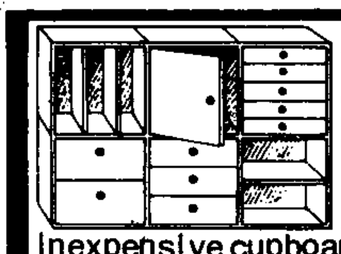

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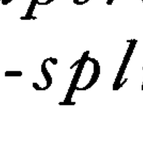

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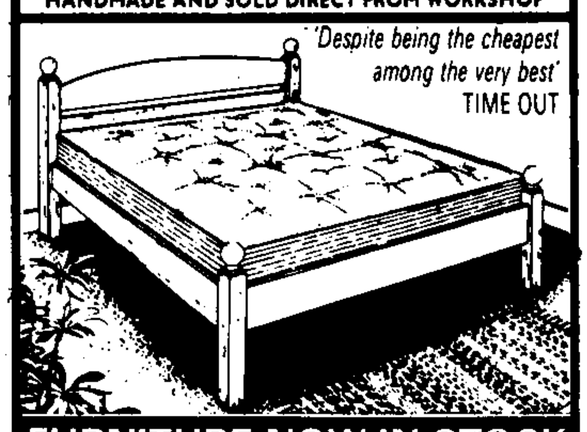

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SPETSES Pine clad secluded bays, varied watersports. azure seas. lively nightlife.
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LIPSI Sandy coves. gentle hills and far from the madding crowds with a very Greek lifestyle.
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and where you need it.
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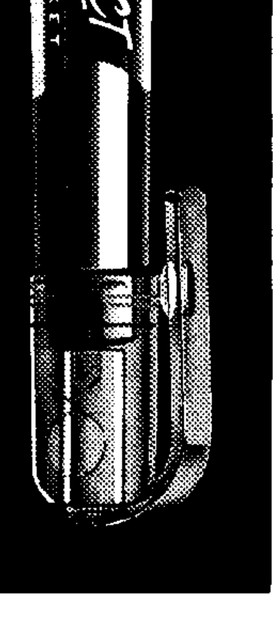

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Gnome

YOU will all have seen by now the photographs of Rita-Nicole Chevrolet-Smith, the Supermodel who at the size of 36D *(shurely 'age of 21'? E.S.)* has agreed to become the heir to my huge fortune *(shurely 'the beautiful young bride of my dreams'? E.S.)*.

Unkind rumours have suggested that there is a significant age gap between myself, at 89, and this voluptuous young creature of 19 who is even now sitting on my knee lovingly caressing my wallet *(shurely 'fevered brow'? E.S.)*.

There are those who even say that this 17-year-old former beauty queen and international jeans model has NOT married me for love.

I say to them that nothing could be further from the truth.

So much does Rita-Nicole love me that there is no moment of the day or night when she does not wish to express this passion for me in its fullest physical sense.

Even now her youthful body is... aaaaargh!

E. Strobes
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PRIVATE EYE

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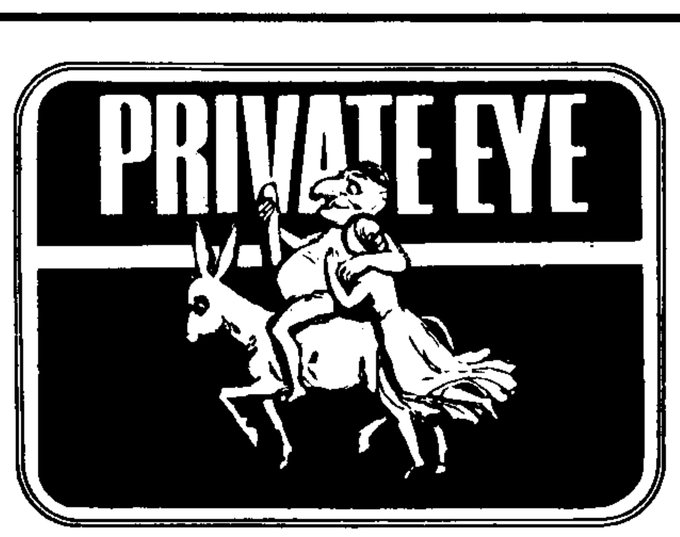
SUBSCRIPTION RATES

See advertisement on page 36.

Continued age 94



COLOUR SECTION

WHY, we asked in the last *Eye*, had Kevin Maxwell recently been visiting Austria?

We did not have to wait long for an answer. The day after our last issue appeared, the German TV channel ARD1 broadcast a documentary about Cap'n Bob, *Mann über Bord* (*Man Overboard*). It included some film shot secretly in Vienna a few weeks ago which showed both Kevin and Ian Maxwell deep in discussion with Gregory Lutschanski and Oknan Doinov, two executives of a company called Nordex.

Students of Maxwellian affairs may recall this Doinov. He used to be Cap'n Bob's chief fixer in Bulgaria, in the days when the fat man was the country's most prominent western supporter.

In 1990, with Doinov's assistance, Maxwell proposed that he should be allowed to take charge of Bulgaria's foreign debt (then standing at $11,0000 billion) while also being entrusted with its foreign currency reserves of $100 million. The new leaders in Sofia declined this offer — which, given Cap'n Bob's penchant for gambling on the foreign exchange market with other people's money, was probably just as well.

According to the German TV documentary, however, the Bulgarian authorities are now rather keen to interview Doinov about large sums of public money which have "gone missing" from the public purse. He is wisely keeping out of the country, devoting himself to the Nordex group, a Swiss-based corporation with offices in Vienna, Dusseldorf, Moscow, Peking and Hong Kong.

The TV programme included some remarkable allegations about Maxwell's dealings with another of his beloved Communist states. In the winter of 1990, it claimed, Gorbachev feared that the Soviet Union's parlous financial condition might cause a political meltdown — and so he agreed to let his old chum Cap'n Bob bankroll $15 billion in Soviet debt repayments. By "selling on" the debt in the secondary debt market, through the agency of Nordex, Maxwell hoped to earn $2,000 million in commission — a sum which might have been enough to save his skin. But then came the *coup* against Gorbachev and the rise of a new regime in Moscow, and the deal collapsed.

Now Nordex itself is under investigation by the Austrian state police — not to mention the Russian police and Interpol — who are curious to know a little more about its business activities. Founded as an Austrian/Latvian joint venture, it specialises in wheeler-dealing in the former Soviet republics. Last September, for instance, it arranged what one financial newspaper called "an unconventional deal" whereby Russia agreed to provide the Ukraine with 12 million tonnes of oil every year; in return, the Ukrainian government promised to transfer to Russia all nuclear warheads still in the Ukraine, and to supply the Russians with farming equipment.

Nordex has also been buying up privatised industries in the former Soviet Union, and seems to have limitless funds at its disposal. But the source of all this money remains a mystery — which is why Herr Inspector von Knacker is taking an interest.

Naturally, there is no suggestion that Kevin and Ian Maxwell are working for either Doinov or Nordex. Presumably their trips to Vienna were motivated by nothing more than the desire to visit an old friend and reminisce about happier days.

MEANWHILE the solicitors to the Maxwell boys, Messrs Peters and Peters, are still trying (with some success) to prevent the media from alluding to their clients, or indeed to Cap'n Bob himself — the argument being that any such mention might prejudice the brothers' chances of a fair trial when they finally come up before the beak on fraud charges.

Strangely, however, Peters and Peters have yet to take any action to suppress Betty Maxwell's forthcoming book of memoirs, *A Mind of My Own*, even though it is packed with references to her famous sons and their infamous father.

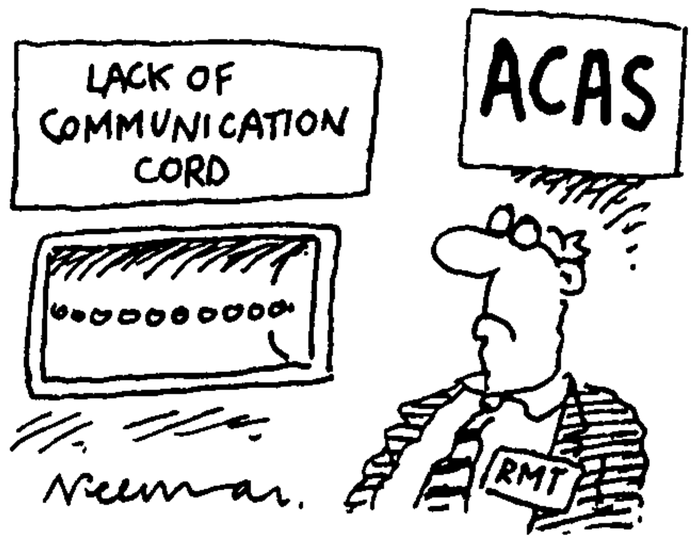
In the manuscript, a copy of which the *Eye* has seen, she describes her late husband as an "insufferable" man who "believed he was above all petty rules". He was "harsh, cruel, uncompromising, dictatorial", and took "a sadistic pleasure in crushing and humiliating" his wife and children. The gist of the book is that Kevin and Ian — like the rest of the family — were innocent victims of his "destructive" personality.

One can see why Peters and Peters don't find this prejudicial, since it can only help their clients' case. But even if they don't seek to postpone publication, others may. The parliamentary select committee on social services, chaired by Frank Field MP, has been warned by the lawyers that it mustn't pursue its inquiries into the Maxwell pensions scandal before the brothers' trial. Field now intends to ask the attorney-general to ensure that a similar gag is applied to Betty Maxwell's self-serving volume.

PS: Mrs Maxwell wrote to the *Grauniad* last week to protest at its claim that her book showed no concern for the Maxwell pensioners. Anyone who studied the manuscript in its entirety would, she said, "know of my deep, personal concern and never-ending sorrow for all those pensioners whose security has been shattered following the collapse of the Maxwell Group". Well, up to a point: the complete typescript, running to hundreds of pages, includes just one sentence in which she expresses her sympathy for the pensioners' "appalling anxiety". And, er, that's it.

PPS: One of the most handsome acknowledgments in Betty's autobiography is to her husband's old rival Rupert Murdoch. And no wonder: while more fastidious publishers refused to have anything to do with the book, the Dirty Digger is not only publishing it in America (through HarperCollins) but also serialising it over here, for a large fee, in his *Sunday Times*.

- ***The Tory TV Sting you'll never see*** *26*
- ***Urquart on Portillo*** *8*
- ***Hallo to Bob Horton!*** *7*
- ***Dirty Diggerwatch*** *11*



Street Of Shame

LAST Wednesday's *Daily Telegraph* carried a column by wine-writer Hugh Johnson which raved about Lord Rothschild's "wonderful" restoration of Waddesdon Manor and encouraged the public to visit the place as paying customers.

He was particularly struck by the cellars, where bottles from France, California, Chile and Portugal "make a whole Rothschild wine-list with which visitors, dazzled by the splendour all around, can console themselves".

In this hymn of praise, Johnson omitted to mention one small fact: he and Lord Rothschild have recently set up a wine company together, a secretive outfit based in St James's which has been quietly purchasing vineyards in France and elsewhere, using Rothschild's money and Johnson's expert knowledge.

Does Max Hastings think it acceptable for his columnists to puff their business partners without declaring an interest? We shall see.

LUVVIES

They get their programmes out in the front row and sit there reading them and you think: get out, read it outside, give that seat to someone who is going to watch the darn thing. I was doing one of the matinées and I heard someone rustling a wrapper and I gave them a look. One of the girls told me she had seen them undoing a packet of pepperoni sausage and handing it round to her friends. I mean, how much more insensitive can you get?

JANE HORROCKS
Observer Magazine

Submitted by Francis Harvey.

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

THE holier-than-thou *Grauniad*, which has remained aloof from the price-cutting war that has embroiled the other broadsheet papers, has had its finger burnt by its own attempt to boost circulation.

"World in a Weekend" was a heavily promoted scheme whereby *Guardian* and *Observer* readers could earn discounts on weekend breaks booked through Regent Travel Services Ltd. All the would-be globe-trotters had to do was collect enough vouchers by buying the papers every day.

Alas! The *Grauniad*'s marketing manager Stephen Palmer has now written to all those who were looking forward to their cheap holidays, informing them that Regent Travel Services Ltd has ceased trading. "I would like to apologise," he adds, "for any inconvenience this unfortunate situation may have caused." Will readers now be reimbursed for all the unwanted copies of the *Grauniad* and *Observer* they had to buy?

ALL those royals sploshing about in the water at Cowes made jolly picture stories for the broadloids (the *Times*, *Daily Hellograph* etc), but not all of them got it right.

"The royal family are old hands at dodging the press pack and, yesterday, gave everyone the slip as Princess Anne, Prince Edward and Sophie Rhys-Jones went wind-surfing when nobody was looking," reported the Cowes diary in the *Times*, which went on to say how it was only a member of the public with an Instamatic who spied the hoorays at play.

Page three of the same edition, in a picture spread of dazzling inanity, told a different story. Ms Rhys-Jones, it said, fell off her windsurfer and her water skis, and: "The only boats to witness the embarrassing spectacle were crewed by photographers and reporters." So much for the paper of record.

JACK TINKER's Saturday column in the *Daily Mail* on 30 July was even more sparkling than usual, as he regaled his readers with a lengthy anecdote about "my dear friend Lesley Joseph", the star of *Birds of a Feather*.

On her way into Harrods, he reported, she had been subjected to sexual taunts from a gang of workmen. When she emerged from the shop, she decided to give them a piece of her mind — and so duly went up to a gang of navvies and told them that they were a bunch of penis-brained inadequates. It was only as she climbed into a taxi and rode triumphantly away that she realised she had exited from a different door into another street: the workmen she had berated had never seen her before.

This incident, which took Tinker many hundreds of words to relate, may have sounded familiar to some *Mail* readers. And no wonder: as most people in the luvvie business know, it in fact happened to the actress Eileen Atkins, at least 20 years ago.

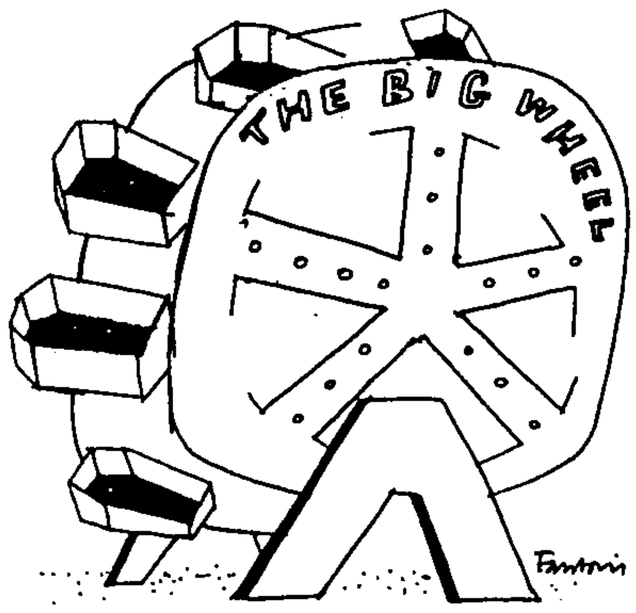
PETER Wilby, acting editor of the *Independent on Sunday*, was visited in his office two weeks ago by Colin Hughes, the daily paper's self-important assistant editor.

The purpose of Hughes's mission was to order Wilby to fill the top of the *Sindie*'s front page with a ludicrous "teaser" about its sister paper. "From tomorrow," it read, "the *Independent* will have a new price — see the paper to find out what it is."

"Well," Wilby inquired gruffly as he surveyed this curious message. "So what *is* the price?"

"I can't tell you," Hughes replied mysteriously. "It is top secret. Only two people in the whole world know what it is."

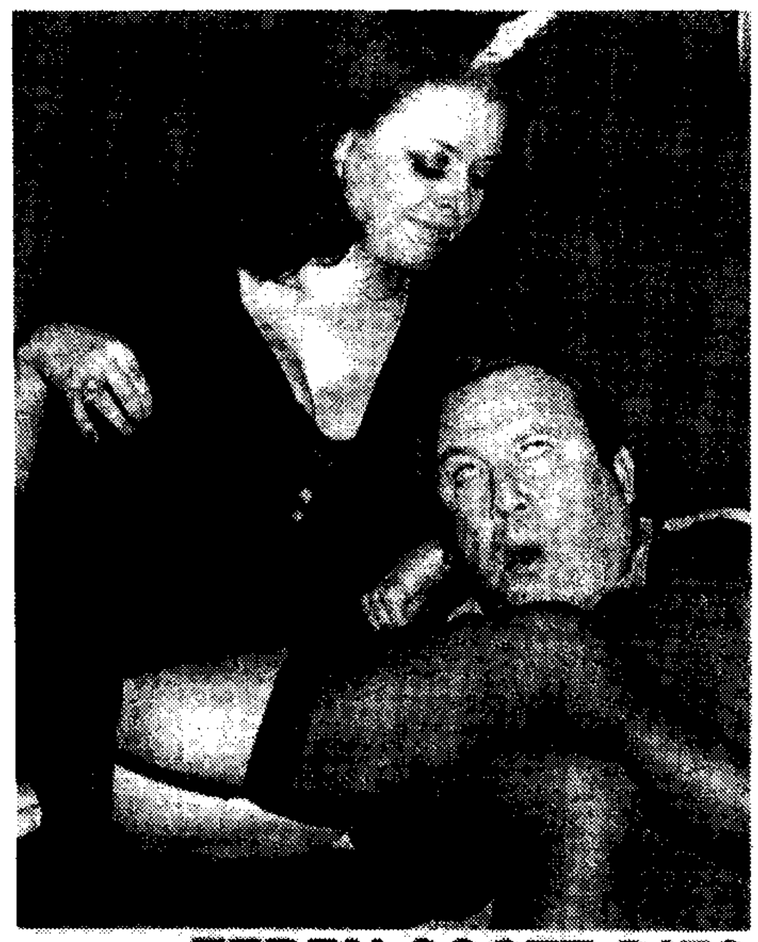
This cloak-and-dagger nonsense was more than Wilby could endure. "You are an utterly preposterous human being!" he yelled at Hughes. "Get out!"



FOGHORN-voiced *Observer* hack John Sweeney was noisier than ever last week as he strode round the newsroom complaining of editor Jonathan Fenby's refusal to let him write a lengthy, definitive account of Kelvin MacKenzie's departure from BSkyB.

Having written a huge magazine piece about Kelvin's behaviour at the satellite station only last month, Sweeney regarded himself as the man most obviously qualified to tackle the assignment. "I wish Kelvin was editor of this paper," he yelled at his bosses. "At least he knows who I am — unlike the current editor."

Sweeney is not the only person to be unimpressed by Fenby's record. Recent market research has revealed that many readers have lost patience with the paper — "boring" and "nothing to read" being the most commonly used phrases. A couple of weeks ago Fenby was summoned to lunch at Frederick's restaurant in Islington with *Grauniad* editor Peter Preston and a member of the Scott Trust, which now owns both papers. To judge by Fenby's expression as he nibbled his repast, his colleagues were not delivering good news.



TERRY SCOTT DIES

● *How* **Tonight,** *a tasteful new evening newspaper for London, reported the death of comedian Terry Scott.*

***GUARDIAN* hack James Wood is suffering from intense status anxiety.**

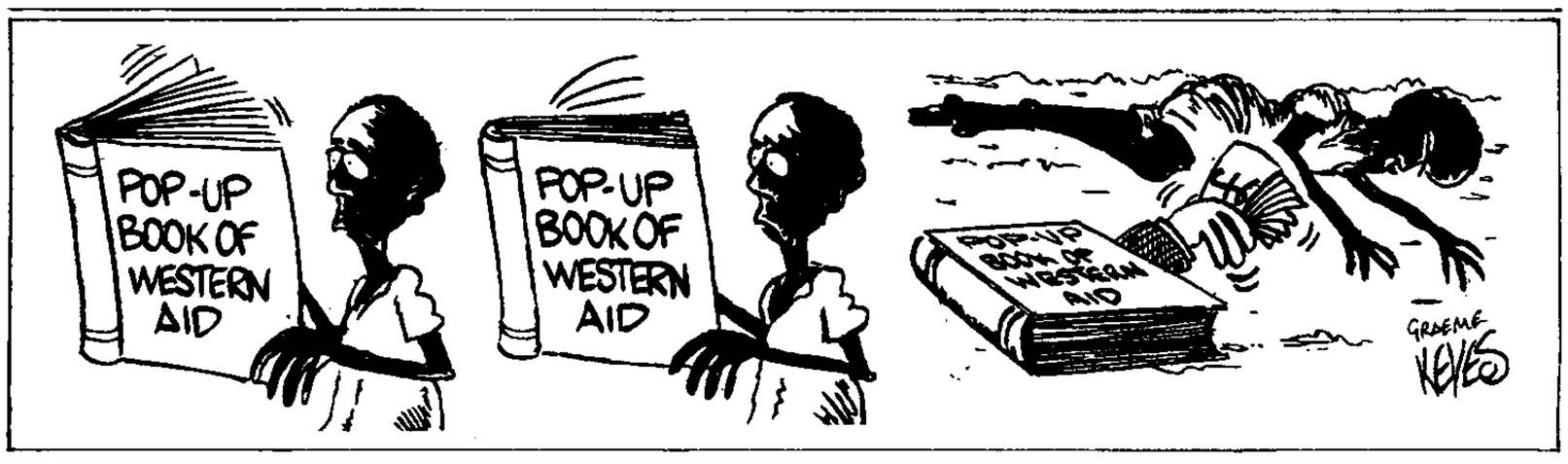
During a recent appearance on BBC2's *The Late Show*, Wood was mortified to see he had been billed as a "journalist". A couple of days later he rang *Late Show* editor Mike Poole to explain that this matter had been preying on his mind, and to insist that for all future appearances he should be described as "writer and critic".

ANOTHER casualty of the long delay in bringing the Maxwell brothers to trial is likely to be the report by department of trade inspectors on the flotation of Mirror Group Newspapers in 1991 and its disastrous aftermath.

One of the inspectors, John Thomas QC, is away in Australia; the other, Raymond Turner from Neville Russell, is not saying a thing about it. But the *Eye*'s information is that they have finished the report and will soon be handing it in to the DTI.

It is likely to be unflattering of the role of Robert Clark, now chairman of MGN, and Charlie "Gorbals" Wilson, now managing director.

The report could be most embarrassing for the two Mirror chieftains, especially since it was their votes (with the active help and encouragement of Arthur Andersen partner John Talbot) which secured the post of chief executive for David Montgomery — against the wishes of two members of the six-man board and the entire Mirror staff.



HOW THEY ARE RELATED

CHRIS MORRIS, the humorous Radio 1 presenter who announced the death of Michael Heseltine, has not only returned to his job at the Beeb but has been writing a holiday relief column for the *Evening Standard*.

Interestingly, he has not so far announced the amusing and true information that he goes out with Jo Unwin, whose uncle happens to be *Evening Standard* editor Stewart Steven.

HALLO!

The new heartwarming column by *The Marquesa*

HALLO! OUR sympathy to Robert Horton, valiant boss of Railtrack who so successfully rose from the dead after being sacked by an ungrateful BP.

His new job has of course been made tiresome by the signalmen and the hard-left proto-anarchists who run their union, the RMT. But if talks have broken down it is not Bob's fault. His greatest skill is his ability and willingness to sack people (shurely *"to communicate in English"*), as the Marquesa was reminded while leafing through the *EFL Careers Guide 1992*.

In it Bob wrote: "English is a language for doing business — because all language is. What was language invented for? Not to sing in, but to do a deal... I have asked myself whether a single language of operation is necessary for a global company. I don't know if one is necessary or not, but I know that one exists. In practice, English is most people's fallback tongue. When in doubt, try English."

We hope the striking malcontents are listening.

HALLO! DEEPEST condolences to my millionaire friend Taki Lotofcokeupthenos, who had his yacht blown up by terrorists a few weeks ago and — more distressingly still — is now reduced to penning the Atticus column in the *Sunday Times*.

Since he has never needed to earn a living, Taki is a bit hazy about such trifling matters as salaries. When he visited Wapping to discuss his contract with *ST* executive Sue Douglas, she informed him that "we were thinking of paying you fifty." The Greek boy was shocked. "Even the *Spectator* pay me more than that for my High Life column," he wailed. Oh all right, Douglas continued, how about sixty? "It's still not enough," he grumbled. "The *Spectator* give me ninety."

At this point the *Sunset Times*'s editor, John Witherow, intervened. "Do you mean to tell us," he demanded, "that the *Spectator* pays you £90,000 a year?"

"No, no — £90 a week," he explained.

Having belatedly realised that the offer from Murdoch's minions had three noughts attached to the end of it, dear old Taki hastily signed on the line *(Not of coke – Ed.)*.

"He's a winosaur"

HALLO! *WHAT a sensitive fellow is TV boss and Labour peer Lord Hollick!*

When Lisa Buckingham of the Grauniad interviewed aggrieved workers sacked at Anglia TV by Hollick's take-over, and made some mild remarks about the difficulty of being a left-wing boss, Hollick went into a petulant rage, rang round all his Labour party friends at the newspaper and abused them for an hour at a time.

When the Graun published a long and pathetic letter from his sidekick, Peter Meier, Hollick still refused to calm down, demanding a ridiculous grovel which, so far, even the Grauniad has resisted.

SOUR GRAPES

THE retirement of Peter Brooke was the most predictable, and sadly perhaps the most welcome feature of this reshuffle. A man of real quality in so many ways, he never seemed able or interested in raising his game to the level required to satisfy the demands of what is in truth one of the most difficult departments in Whitehall.

DAVID MELLOR
The Guardian

HALLO! WE ARE amused by the sexual blather surrounding *The Story of O* and the supposed "revelation" in the *New Yorker* magazine of the true identity of the female author of this S&M classic.

The writer of this masterpiece of masochism is one Dominque Aury who, now 86, still works as an editor at the French publishing house of Gallimard. Sadly for the *New Yorker* and the other hackettes filling pages with angst-ridden drivel about women and pornography, this is not news.

Aury's identity was revealed way back in 1973 by Martin Seymour-Smith in his *Essential Guide To Modern World Literature*. The Marquesa shares his opinion of the book: "The whippings are too frequent and too severe..." Perhaps Tina Brown should have a few.

HALLO! THE discord emanating from Manchester's Halle Orchestra, where music director "Sir Kent" Nagano and manager David Richardson have been at war, raises some interesting questions.

Why did the hugely talented Nagano demand an astonishing *10 rehearsals* for that obscure and little-known score, er, Beethoven's 9th Symphony?

And why, after similar daft demands have left the orchestra's coffers empty, was it poor old Richardson who ended up resigning in protest and not the hugely talented etc. "Sir Kent"?

Pseuds Corner

Chadwick describes Piss Flowers as a unique form of love-making, a "metaphysical conceit for the union of two people expressing themselves bodily". Her logic may seem perverse, but the results are strangely moving. On Planet Piss, one of the most ephemeral and private activities is apotheosised. Urine is sent skywards, and given a quasi-geological certainty and solidity.

JAMES HALL
Guardian

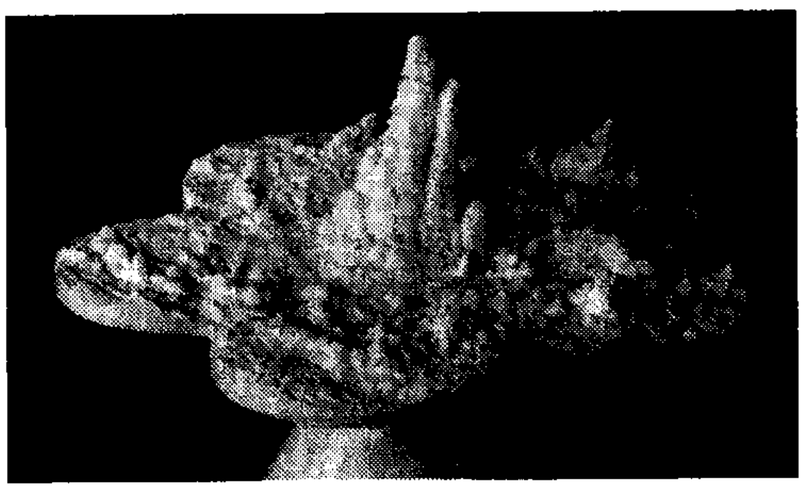
When David and I had been together for about a year we were living in different countries. There's nothing like separation to sharpen up desire and out of that sense of urgency the concept of the "piss flowers" was formed when we met again in Canada. We heaped up piles of snow and first I would piss into it and then he would piss around my mark. I made casts of the indentations which were eventually exhibited as bronze sculptures.

HELEN CHADWICK
Independent

Chadwick aimed a single jet into the middle of the templates, and this created tall encrusted forms that are like a cross between stamens and stalagmites. In this respect, she is Goliath, and David is David. He slung his urine modestly and diffusely around the edges. Yet his efflorescences are as fluffy and dazzling as any cloud-study by Constable.

JAMES HALL
Guardian

What Chadwick succeeds in doing with panache and wit is to question the accepted language of gender. There is within her imagery a conscious striving to reject a female-body image that is either a male "reflection" or an attempt to be "like men". The male view of women is always essentially a place of danger, the ensnaring womb of the mother, the *vagina dentata*, a place of confinement and closure. The challenge for feminist theoreticians such as Irigaray and artists such as Helen Chadwick is to find a new imagery appropriate to women that is open, singing, alive and turning on its "own axis".



SUE HUBBARD
New Statesman and Society

At the same time, though, we get an acute sense of sterility and impotence. These flowers could be the world's first monuments to incontinence. They are icy memorials to clapped-out couples whose leaky bodies can no longer get it together.

JAMES HALL
Guardian

Chadwick is more consistently successful when exploring sexual ambiguity. Big Fleur, a cibachrome of a tulip splayed open to reveal a man's supine arse (and a penis so foreshortened that it looks like a pimple!), is a deft celebration of masculine passivity. As succinctly androgynous as Eat Me, a set of photos of bluebells framing orifices ambiguous enough to be vaginal or sphincteral. Another image, a penis-shaped wreath cut down the middle by what looks like a vagina, turns the tables on the throbbing male member/passive pussy cliché.

DOMINIC LUTYENS
The Pink Paper

Technically, Cacao is an orgasmatron for chocaholics and coprophiliacs. It is a heady mix of fertility and infertility symbols. The pipe in the middle is a sticky joystick, a thinly-veiled phallus. Cacao reminded me of two things in particular, which I then proceeded to conflate: the overflowing bath of the Flake-fellating woman, and the sea of shit in Dante's Inferno.

JAMES HALL
Guardian

CONTRIBUTORS: James Hall quotes — everyone (even bigger entry than Esther Rantzen last issue); M. Post; N. Verardi; Anon.

£10 paid for entries

IN THE TEAROOM

WHEN John Major began to look vulnerable to the Europhile, One Nation lefty Kenneth Clarke, Neil Hamilton, a junior minister in Michael Heseltine's trade department and normally thought of as a keen Thatcherite, began canvassing support for Hezza among fellow right-wingers.

"Michael," he told colleagues, "is really a good National Socialist at heart." This was Hamilton's idiosyncratic way of conveying the idea that Hezza wasn't really a big-government interventionist; that he had a deregulation bill up his sleeve to get Whitehall off the backs of business; and that he was much more "sound" on Europe than he looked.

Despite Lady Thatcher's offstage outrage, a growing number of her former cronies signed up for Hamilton's proposition. Heseltine, it was agreed, could stop Clarke and Portillo wasn't yet ready.

John Smith's death, though it carried an intimation of Heseltine's own mortality as a heart attack victim, didn't significantly affect that calculation. MPs recognise that Hezza has enough front to publish his electro-cardiograms as cheerfully as US politicians publish their tax returns. And nor does a young Blair necessarily require a young Portillo: it's often better to fight youth with experience. But last week's leak of Portillo's letter to Heseltine, which urged the president of the board of trade to cut his department's spending, exposed the Prezza as an unreconstructed spender. And that's not on at all.

Having regained the support of the right, Portillo swiftly picked a fight with David Hunt over control of women's affairs, and another with Clarke and Major over cutting the training budget. He now has all the enemies he needs to win. More supporters, though, will have to be found in the centre ground of Tory politics, so MPs can expect to be approached at party conference in Bournemouth by pink-faced young men with a message: "Michael isn't such a Falangist at heart, you know."

'Urquart'

THE closure of the Royal Marines School of Music at Deal in the latest round of defence cuts is a tribute to the complete lack of influence of the local MP, David Shaw.

The Tory member for Dover is currently one of the noisiest characters in the Commons. He has joined the rent-a-quote tendency with a vengeance, trying to give the impression of being an informed purveyor of heavyweight political opinion.

But he was also noisy on the hustings during the run-up to the 1992 election when he gave assurances that the government would never close the RMS. It was, and would remain, a tribute and memorial to the fight against the IRA.

When it became clear the school would close, Shaw asked a cross-sounding question in the Commons, which he followed up with lashings of humbug of the "great-tragedy-but-we-must-all-do-our-bit" variety in the East Kent press.

He has a majority of 880 and is not expected to survive another election. But he has collected a large clutch of consultancies and the like which might tide him over. Future constituency selection panels have been warned.

***EYE* readers will recall the remarkable monosyllabic answer from the parliamentary under secretary at the foreign office, Mark Lennox Boyd, to a question on 3 November from Labour MP Llew Smith.**

Asked whether there was any link between aid to Malaysia for the Pergau dam and trade deals with that country, the normally garrulous minister replied: "No". When asked on *Despatches* in May why he hadn't given a little bit more detail in this not entirely satisfactory answer, Lennox-Boyd explained that his secretary of state, Douglas Hurd, was giving evidence to the select committee two days later. Whoops! When Hurd appeared on 23 November he didn't even mention the Pergau dam.

Stung by this rather blatant economy with the truth, Smith and a bunch of 30 Labour MPs put down an early-day motion calling on Lennox-Boyd to resign. He also wrote with the same demand to John Major. Major replied (on 20 May): Mark Lennox-Boyd's answers were "wholly accurate". Resignation was out of the question. Major's view was only partially shared by the Commons foreign affairs select committee Pergau inquiry, which closely investigated Lennox-Boyd's reply, along with several others of that ilk.

"We have found," the committee concluded, "in the light of our evidence that ministerial replies to certain questions were literally true, though less open and informative than the House has the right to expect."

On the day the report was published, there was a cabinet re-shuffle. Among the junior ministers who "resigned" (were sacked) was Mark Lennox-Boyd. Like Graham Bright, the prime minister's private secretary, (who was also sacked, for different reasons) Lennox Boyd had his compensation. The Queen approved his knighthood.

PS: The report of the foreign affairs select committee carries an interesting postscript for those who argue that commercial interests do not disrupt the important work of MPs. The Pergau inquiry should have been chaired by the committee's chairman David Howell, Tory MP for Guildford. He had to step down from this important job because he is a director of Trafalgar House... one of the main firms involved in the Pergau dam affair.

"I want to make A-Levels easy enough for me to get one"

HOW DO government departments match up to the chancellor's ringing insistence in his budget speech last year that bills should be paid on time?

Tory MP Harold Elletson asks the government for "prompt payment" figures for each department. The replies are quite good: in most cases fewer than 10 per cent of bills are paid outside the agreed period (or 30 days if there is no agreed period). But there are two very embarrassing exceptions.

The first is the home office, which paid up late in a staggering 28 per cent of cases. The bad habits in home office payments are believed to have started during the reign of the last home secretary, one Kenneth Clarke, who is now the chancellor.

The other exception, with 23 per cent of late payments, is even more distressing: the cabinet office.

'Backbiter'

FRAUD

ACCOUNTANTS at Price Waterhouse were delighted at the conviction and three-year jail sentence for fraud of Imran Imam, a former manager of BCCI.

Judge Pownall said the defendants had deceived the auditors — Price Waterhouse — and if it had not been for that deception the auditors would have had a much clearer idea of the extent of the biggest bank fraud in history.

This was hogwash. Imam's deception of Price Waterhouse was, by comparison with the fraud Price Waterhouse should have detected, small and marginal. But the judge's words will be of inestimable value when PW defends a multi-billion pound claim against it by the BCCI receiver, Touche Ross.

There was no celebration, however, at the offices of the American law-enforcers, nor at the City of London police, where the general view is that the serious fraud office (SFO) behaved disgracefully to catch a minnow where it could not catch a bigger fish. John Moscow, New York county assistant district attorney, and Rick Small from the Federal Reserve, made unprecedented pleas to the British judge to be lenient with Imam, whose information had helped US authorities raise $700m for defrauded depositors.

But the judge sneered at "other jurisdictions" which had allowed the big BCCI crooks to plead guilty in exchange for vast payments in compensation. (One such was Kamal Adham, former intelligence chief in Saudi Arabia and brother-in law to the late king Faisal. He sneaked into a Manhattan court to plead guilty to a minor charge on which he was freed in exchange for $105m. Perhaps Judge Pownall would have been less sanctimonious had he known that the deal was agreed in detail in London in premises guarded by the Metropolitan police.)

The judge went out of his way to praise the SFO and its accountants who took part in the BCCI inquiry. Many of these were seconded to the SFO from the big accountancy firms.

Mr Mark Ballamy was one such accountant at the SFO when the BCCI inquiry started. The SFO is keen to assure the *Eye* that he had nothing to do with the investigation. "It was held in quite a different building to the one occupied by Mr Ballamy," said a spokeswoman. This reassurance may have something to do with the firm from which Mr Ballamy was seconded — Price Waterhouse — to which he has now returned.

JOHN KENT PRESENTS
JOHN MAJOR'S SENSATIONAL BIG TOP CIRCUS & MENAGERIE
THE RIVAL
ALL THIS PRAISE FOR BLAIR!
WHAT IS IT BASED ON?
A DISLIKE OF YOU!
John Kent

NOOKS and CORNERS

BELIEVE it or not, there are parts of Essex that do not consist entirely of roundabouts, garages, roadhouses, semi-detached houses and the other haunts of proud Essex Man.

Essex is an ancient county and there are areas full of charm where old buildings have been permitted to survive. One such is Old Hall Farmhouse at Orsett, a timber-framed house dated from the late 15th or early 16th century. The half-timber is infilled with plaster, while later alterations — red brickwork, tile hanging and sliding sash windows — add to the mellow impression of organic growth. In fact, it all looks very real and picturesque.

Or, rather, *looked*: poor Old Hall Farmhouse has been acquired by archetypal Essex Woman Teresa Gorman, the eternally-youthful Thatcherite MP for Billericay. And what was good enough for previous Essex owners of this unassuming grade II listed building is not good enough for Mrs Gorman. Oh no.

Old Hall Farmhouse, pre-Gorman

Essex Man and Woman, like Surrey Man, for that matter, doesn't care for old buildings to look, well, old. History must be scrubbed and embellished and improved and, above all, modernised. So Old Hall Farmhouse has been enhanced with French windows and a fine picture window, while other windows have been inserted and the sash windows have been replaced by olde worlde mullioned ones. A new porch has been added and the front door altered and renewed; 19th century brickwork has been removed, as has tile-hanging, while the renovated house is now made conspicuous with security lighting — the Gormans are important people, after all.

None of this is in the least surprising, of course. It is what happens when upwardly-mobile wealthy vulgarians get hold of an old house to "do up". Of course, one would rather that instead of spoiling a decent old house, such people might build a nice new one with all mod cons but in a cosy traditional style. Quinlan Terry, Essex's most celebrated architect, would, I am sure, have been glad to oblige.

What is interesting in this case, however, is that Mrs Gorman has buggered up a decent old listed building *entirely without listed building consent*. No doubt the member for Billericay, as a good libertarian, considers historic building legislation an infringement of the right of the individual to do what he (or she) likes with his (or her) property. Lord Salisbury took that line in the 19th century when the first ancient monuments legislation was being mooted to protect things like Stonehenge. But that is scarcely the point. The point is that Mrs Gorman has broken the law.

So what is Thurrock borough council going to do? Its officers would like to prosecute but, naturally, the good councillors do not want to disoblige an Essex luminary like Mrs Gorman. In fact, as parts of Old Hall Farmhouse have been demolished, English Heritage ought to be consulted; but I do not suppose the egregious chairman of that quango would wish to prevent such a distinguished politician having her own way with a mere grade II listed building.

Come back Harvey Proctor: all is forgiven.

SPEAKING of English Heritage, I must apologise for an unintentional slur on the moral qualities of gerbils. They have more backbone than I had supposed.

Mr Paul "Gerbil" Drury figured in this column (Eye 817) when he became head of the London division after Sophie Andraea had been summarily sacked by chairman Stevens. Now he is in the news again — and rather to his credit.

The issue was the so-called Beecham Building on the Great West Road, a former factory with a striking tower of 1937 by Wallis Gilbert & Partners — architects of the famous Firestone Factory which was demolished over a bank holiday weekend in 1980 by Sir Nigel Broackes and Lord Maffhews in anticipation of listing. Naturally this one is now listed and, naturally, the London borough of Hounslow does not wish to lose any more art deco buildings along the Great West Road.

So, when SmithKline Beecham came up with outline redevelopment proposals by that socially committed and caring genius Sir Richard Rogers, English Heritage formally directed Hounslow to refuse listed building consent on the ground of its architectural importance, the viability of refurbishment, the fact that the application was only outline and so may never be realised and because the benefit of redevelopment to the local community is "dubious".

But chairman Jocelyn, whose mission is to keep in with the great and the good, had other ideas and was furious that the London division of English Heritage had taken this stand. At a meeting with the architect on 19 July, Paul Drury was "publicly humiliated" by Stevens for, very properly, defending his staff's decisions. Old Piranha Teeth did the same the following day at the meeting of the English Heritage commissioners (who remained unimpressed). As a consequence, Mr Drury then tendered his resignation.

Now here is the amazing thing: on 22 July Jocelyn Stevens sent a letter of apology to the newspapers who printed this story, denying that Mr Drury had resigned and that he had launched an attack on English Heritage's decision to oppose demolition of the Beecham Building. So the good old Gerbil is still in place.

But an important question remains unanswered: who determines English Heritage's policies? The officers who know something about architecture — or the chairman who knows better, depending upon whom he has had lunch with or whom he has been in a helicopter with. Perhaps the new heritage minister, Mr Dorrell, might give his attention to this considerable problem.

'Piloti'

SALLY DEEDES

WHEN the superstore giant Sainsbury's sponsored the *Blue Peter Green Book*, published by the BBC in 1990, the then chairman Lord Sainsbury boasted of the chain's concern for the environment.

"At Sainsbury's we are trying to contribute in many different ways by building and running our supermarkets so that they do not damage the environment," he said.

But the facts look rather different. Last month we highlighted the plight of Kimberley primary school, whose pupils are to be blessed with a Sainsbury's petrol station just yards from their play area. And now another group of children, those at Hasleton primary school in Bell Green, south-east London, are to look out over a superstore and parking area for more than 1,000 cars.

Local traffic will of course increase, which is a pity. As an article in Sainsbury's own glossy magazine says: "Benzine is a carcinogen for which the World Health Organisation recognises no safe limits, in the US petrol stations are no longer allowed to be built in residential areas or near schools."

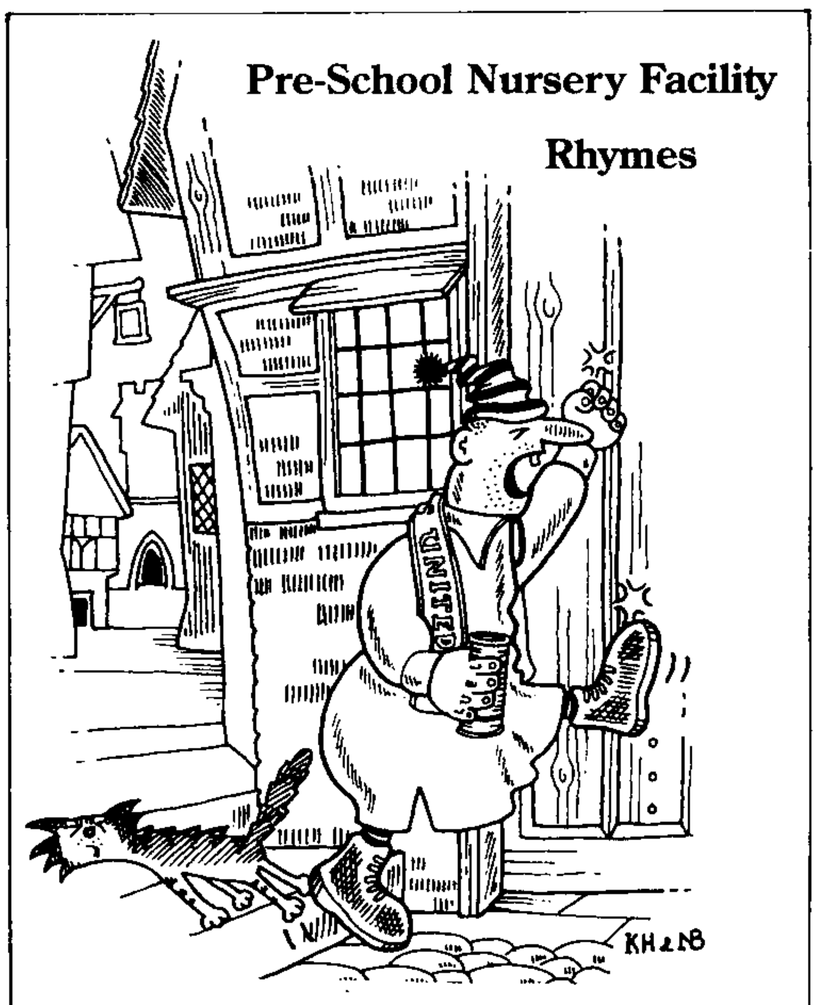
Quite apart from the store's seemingly schizophrenic attitude to children's health, critics have other reasons for doubting Sainsbury's commitment to the environment. They accuse it of causing planning blight and disregarding the green belt.

One example is in Bexley, south London, where Sainsbury's had bought a piece of derelict land for which planning permission was turned down on the ground that it would affect the local shopping area — which at that time was poised for refurbishment by a local developer appointed by the council.

Sainsbury's — since it can afford it — took the case to appeal. The whole process took four years, during which time the developer, unable to match the cost and possible competition, pulled out. The result? A dying shopping centre; an unused derelict site and no new jobs.

Nor does Sainsbury seem too concerned with some parts of the green belt. Just outside Croydon is a pleasant piece of rural land: Addington Green, which is currently used for grazing. Sainsbury's wanted the borough under its county development plan to redesignate the 36-acre site as non-green belt. This demand has been modestly reduced to 11 acres, along with an amendment to the Croydon shopping plan which is against out of town shopping areas. Quite why the food giant should want this piece of land is mystifying: 3½ miles away, Chelsham has a new Sainsbury's opening in November, and 1½ miles in the other direction West Wickham has its own store.

Sainsbury's green message is also making people see red in Dulwich. At the beginning of the century the devout Christian Lord Hambleton bequeathed a sports ground to King's College there. Now, despite the opposition of five MPs and countless residents, the land is the site... of a superstore. No doubt Sainsbury's will soon be updating its views on the environment to reflect its new policies.



Wee Willie Winkie
Rampages through the town
Just because his team lost
Seven goals down.

The Human Animal
(BBC1)

THERE was a vitally important line in episode two of Desmond Morris's latest six-part examination of the human condition. "To discover *why* this happened, we need to discover *where* this took place," explained Morris.

For those who study popular television, this was an exceptionally exciting moment. Here was a perfectly preserved example of *presentoris disingenuous*, the television frontman. Note the cunning powers of reasoning and speech — to know *why* is to go *where* — by which a small group of human beings have evolved a lifestyle which involves flying off to hot places at the BBC's expense during the long English winter. In this instance, for example, the where that was showing Morris why humans were as they are happened to be the beaches of Eastern Africa.

In fact, the species to which Desmond Morris belongs has not been, in evolutionary terms, very successful. The globe-trotting pop-philosophical epic documentary — telly's equivalent of the magazine part-work — is more or less extinct, killed off by fashion and budget reductions. One of the old stars of the genre, James Burke, turned up recently as a museum piece, fronting an Apollo retro doc, but looked the dinosaur he is. Only in the world of wildlife documentaries does the style survive, kept going by Sir David Attenborough.

It is here that we see how clever Desmond Morris has been. With the departments that made his epic series *The Naked Ape* and *Manwatching* no longer backing such stuff, Morris came up with *The Human Animal*, a title and series making so absolutely explicit his trick of treating people as if they were animals that the series has been funded by — wait for it — the BBC Natural History Unit in Bristol, patrons to Attenborough and his wildlife series. This is a classic example of professional evolution, allowing an old presenter to go on providing for himself in a harsh new climate. Morris even delivers, in the new series, an Attenborough-parody piece to camera, hunched in front of a pack of scratching animals.

Essentially a clever retread of *The Naked Ape* and *Manwatching*, *The Human Animal* is classic Morris. In a perfect example of how the media animal lays down a scent to attract the attention of the tribe, he included a sequence in which a camera was inserted in a vagina during love-making, thus providing TV with the first ever muff-diver's view of a female orgasm.

"Just slow down a moment, sir — 'Dave Lee Travis, Simon Bates, Bob Harris...' "

While the viewer waits to get there in episode three, the opening programmes relied heavily on Morris's career gimmick of reverse anthropomorphism, pretending that humans are animals. Hence, programme two, taking "hunting" as its theme, began with a jump cut from tribal warriors stalking through the jungle to harassed housewives trolleying through Sainsbury's.

Over this, Morris delivered a nearly perfect paragraph of the kind of lateral paragraphs that have made him famous: "Viewed as a pattern of human feeding behaviour, the trip to the supermarket is the remarkable end-point of the long journey through evolutionary time — a journey that started in a primaeval forest and ended at a check-out counter. To me, it is the story of an arboreal ape which became a ground-dweller predator which in turn became a credit-card customer..."

And, next time you're stuck in a traffic jam on the city circular, reflect on Morris's revolutionary new view of the morning commute: "The primaeval act of setting off on a hunt has now acquired a new name — now we call it going to work. Modern hunters leave the house not on a chase for large animals but in pursuit of contracts, deals and sales. They'll make a *killing* in the city and bring home the *bacon*..."

The producer might have done the programme a service if he had encouraged that final image through a few more stages of evolution, but, in these two little speeches, we see the secret of Morris's success. It was wrongly put about in the 60s — mainly by dim vicars and bishops — that Morris was some kind of dangerous radical and heretic, shouting it from the rooftops that man was no better than a monkey. In fact, though, Morris lavishly flatters humankind, telling his viewers and readers of the miracles they are. His message is essentially that of the recent BUPA ad: "You are wonderful." Beyond this, he encourages his audience to believe that daily drudgeries — shopping, driving to work — are a sacred and mystical continuation of their ancient ancestors' life-patterns.

Oh, I nearly forgot. Next time you set off in your car, recreating "the primaeval act of setting off on a hunt", don't get too pissed off if you get a parking ticket. Traffic wardens, you see, are also "pseudo-hunters". As Morris explains: "The average traffic warden has the satisfaction of making several *kills* a day." The viewer who did not feel their primaeval killing instinct returning, in the direction of Morris, at this moment is an evolutionary exception indeed.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

JOHN BIRT's politburo at the BBC's chaotic news and current affairs "directorate" planned an exclusive little gathering last month to claim credit for the last 40 years of television news from the Beeb.

Guests for the celebration at Alexandra Palace, once the home of BBC Television News, were to be limited to a mere 50 carefully chosen followers of the Birt faith. One of Birt's lieutenants boasted that he was personally vetting the guest list to ensure that no known dissenters, retired or otherwise, would be invited. What's more, he added, there would be no "oily rags" — camera operators, picture editors or technicians, who have a long tradition of offering cheerfully robust abuse to unpopular bosses at such social occasions.

A deputation of angry Ally Pally veterans descended on the directorate's bunker at TV Centre, threatening a publicised mass-gatecrash of the party if they weren't invited. Chris Cramer, the BBC's oafish "head of newsgathering", hastily reassured them that the vetting procedure had been a "misunderstanding". Come the day of the event, Cramer and his fellow executives sipped nervously at their mineral water while hordes of retired hacks — and oily rags — enjoyed a rowdy reunion at their old stamping ground.

CHRIS "Scarface" Cramer, meanwhile, is one of several top people at the BBC to have been sent on a series of expensive management courses. All to no avail.

"Scarface" has been practising his newfound skills on his demoralised subordinates. Thus he and several henchmen have been telling any hack who dares question the punishing new duty rostas at Television News to "fit in or fuck off".

Even veteran hack Martin Bell, still limping from the groin full of mortar bomb shrapnel he collected in Sarajevo, gets the same treatment. When Martin Sixsmith was removed from his post as Washington correspondent, Bell, who had previously clocked up 12 years in the job, applied to return to it.

Cramer summoned him to his office, threw his crumpled-up application form down in front of him and told him: "Get this piece of shit off my desk."

NO SOONER had the last *Eye* hit the street — reporting how Rupert Murdoch wanted to dump QVC, the crap home shopping channel, from his BSkyB package — than one of his house journals took up the story.

QVC, SHOPPING WITH KNOBS ON, ENJOYS TOP SALES, wrote Alexandra Frean in the *Times*, outlining how it had just notched up its best-ever weekend — sales of £50,000 thanks to the arrival of "own-brand simulated diamond jewellery".

Projections still put the company £12 million short of its hoped for annual turnover, but more convincing proof that QVC is as disappointing as the *Eye* said it was, came lower down the article. Frean reported how BSkyB was reducing its holding in QVC from 50 percent to 20 percent... but was remaining "tight-lipped" as to why.

PETS WIN PRIZES
THE RULES ARE SIMPLE, LADIES & GENTLEMEN....
YOU GET A BIG FAT CAT...
WITH SHAGGY HAIR...
THAT MAKES A TERRIBLE NOISE AND PRODUCES CRAP...
AND YOU GIVE HIM LOADS OF MONEY!
MY SALARY £250,000
1ST PRIZE FOR TAKING BBC STANDARDS TO THE DOGS!

I-BSkyB

Sun Spot

GORILLAS Nico and Samba — who live on an island in a lake at Longleat safari park, Wilts — have a satellite TV to prevent boredom.

The Sun

CONTRIBUTOR: Mrs M. Logan

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

THE fearless Broadcasting Council for Wales recently censured BBC Wales over a *Week In Week Out* programme which questioned the relationship between two Welsh quangos.

The quangos in question were the Welsh Development Agency and the Development Board for Rural Wales, and the former was criticised for its handling of a proposed Tesco supermarket development in the Cynon Valley.

At its subsequent monthly meeting the Broadcasting Council, led by its chairman Dr Gwyn Jones, condemned the programme and urged BBC Wales to tone down its investigative journalism.

Funnily enough, no mention was made of the fact that Dr Jones is a former chairman of the Welsh Development Agency and a non-executive director of, er, Tesco; that fellow broadcasting watchdog Tony Roberts is chief executive of Cynon Valley borough council... or that another broadcasting council member, Christine Lewis, sits on the Development Board for Rural Wales.

BIRTSPEAK

RESOURCES managing director Rod Lynch has thanked staff after a difficult first year for the directorate.

"The Resources Directorate was set a challenging task for 1993/94 and met it, producing a deficit of less than 1 percent of turnover: this was an excellent result given the problems associated with settling down to our new modus operandi," says Lynch.

Lynch pays tribute to his staff, drawn from six directorates, thanking them for the "substantial effort that has been put into the re-shaping of the Directorate".

But while well advanced, he insists that the adjustments are not complete. "The pace of technological innovation and the competitive forces of the market place, will... ensure that our trading environment remains subject to constant change as we strive towards fulfilling our mission of becoming the most successful resource provider in the broadcasting industry."

— Ariel, 19 July 1994

GRIM news from Charlton, south London: local resident Garry Bushell, the *Sun*'s gorilla-like TV critic, has been about the village auditioning musicians.

No, he isn't reforming his pisspoor punk band. The word is that, having recently managed to sell some gags to Brian Conley's TV series, he's now working on a "shock-rock/stand-up" act of his own, to be launched after his pantomime debut in Southend at Christmas.

Rumours also abound of a Bushell television show (on Sky, perchance?) and of a major support slot in a Blackpool summer season in 1995. Benidorm here we come!

DIGGERWATCH

BUILD 'em up and knock 'em down, the philosophy by which the tabloids chase circulation with non-stories about showbiz "stars", is causing increasing embarrassment to the well educated and exceedingly polite children of Rupert Murdoch.

The Digger hopes to hand his global media business over to them sometime within the next decade. Although not the eldest, the heiress-apparent is the recently wed Elizabeth Murdoch, an upmarket Barbie doll lookalike who is now learning how to run the film side of News Corp.

Like the rest of the family she sees her inheritance as a respectable blue chip operation. The nasty, old-fashioned print media — which laid the empire's financial foundations relying on the "skills" of such barrow boy types as the recently departed Kelvin MacKenzie — is now a potential source of blushes to her rich and influential friends.

The family would like to enter the next century as one of the major providers of screen-based software — ie cinema films, TV, video and computer games. But how can they establish good "talent relations" or, more accurately, suck up to the relatively small number of actors, directors and producers whose goodwill is vital, while elsewhere in the stable the grubby *Sun* and *News of the Screws* are trashing celebrity reputations?

Andrew Neill has already paid the price for interfering with expansion into the lucrative Asian television market, and now Kelvin has been toppled for threatening the viability of the European operation by being both aggressively downmarket and an inhibiting factor in maintaining close relations with government.

The presence within the group of titles like the *Screws*, edited by MacKenzie's gormless protégé Piers Morgan, poses a particular problem because its dissection of the private lives of "stars" is unlikely to appeal to the powerful Hollywood talent agencies or their clients.

If Murdoch now appears sensitive to the problem, his children are more likely still to clamp down on the worst excesses of celebrity reporting on both Fox TV and, particularly, in their British papers.

One early beneficiary of the new policy is smug but talented actress Jodie Foster, who in the past has been the target of stories (many written by P. Morgan) suggesting she is a butch, man-hating weirdo. The release of *Maverick*, however, led to the Murdoch press realising just how feminine, friendly and down to earth Foster is. This was handy: by coincidence, Murdoch was personally involved with negotiations for Foster to star in an upcoming 20th Century Fox film with Robert Redford.

At the last moment she pulled out due to script wrangles, a move which in the past would have seen the *Screws* investigations department parked on her gynaecologist's doorstep. But not any more. Next month another Foster film, *Nell*, moves into post-production in London. Co-starring Liam Neeson and Natasha Richardson (whose recent marriage was largely untroubled by the sort of stories in News Group titles that could once have been expected), the film is 50 percent financed by Murdoch and is destined for worldwide cinema distribution by Fox before being screened on the global satellite network.

As the profits from screen-based products far exceed those from print, this more positive approach to stories about major actors can confidently be predicted to continue. Not only that, but Murdoch's children — particularly Los Angeles-based Princess Elizabeth — can do without embarrassing encounters at dinner parties with hostile celebs, and in any case they have little or no emotional attachment to the papers which financed their inheritance.

It is possible the children will eventually get out of the newspaper industry altogether, although probably not while Papa is alive. Meanwhile, salacious assaults on celebs are likely to be replaced by a greater emphasis on humiliating private individuals, accident victims and those with physical deformities. So there could still be a role within News Group for Kelvin, after all...

SO WHY else did the unashamedly downmarket Kelvin MacKenzie have to say bye-bye to BSkyB?

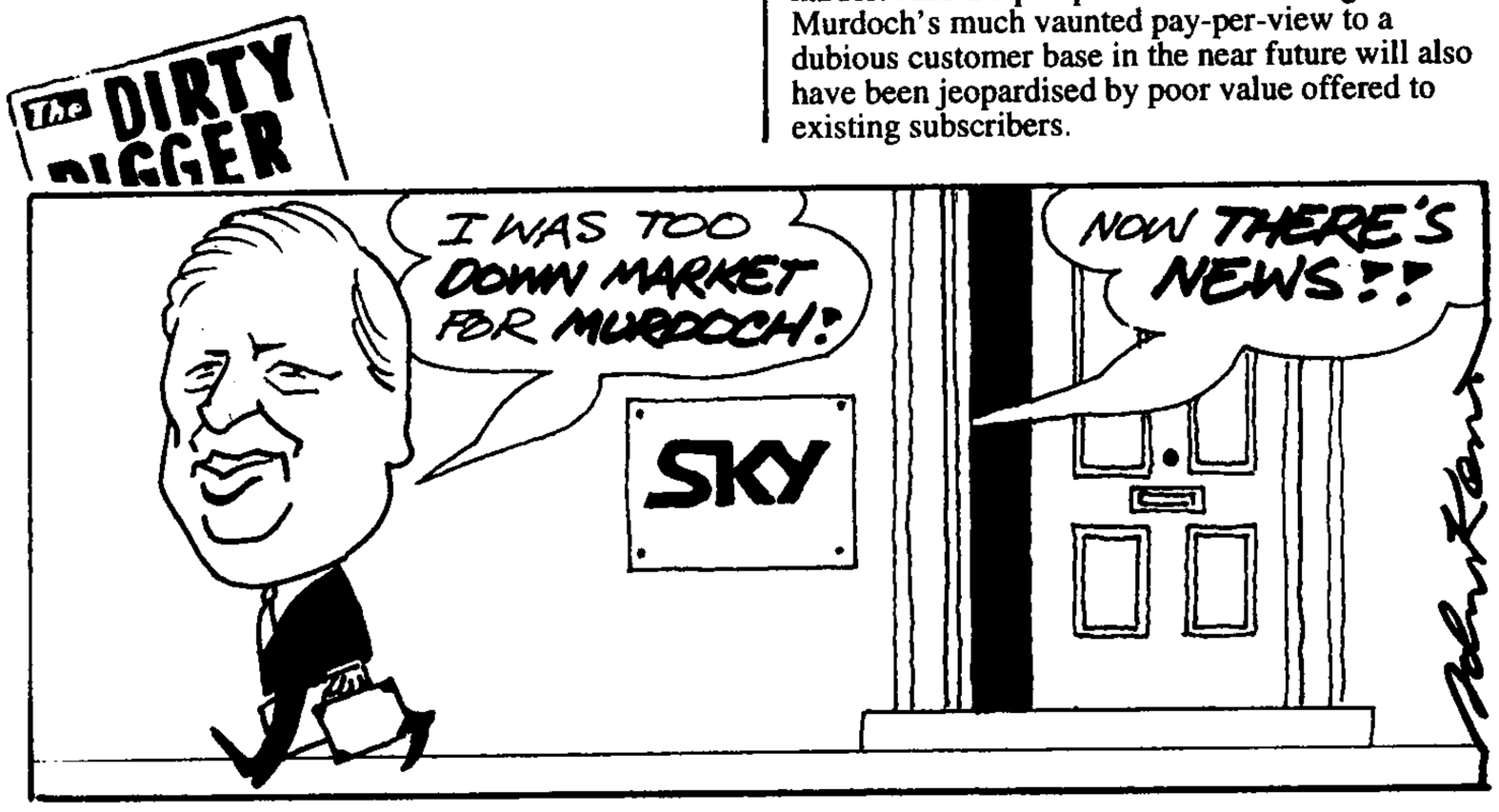
Much has been made of his signing of pisspoor *Sun* chum Richard Littlejohn to present a show on Sky in the autumn for £200,000 a year. But one of the main reasons for the "personality conflict" with chief executive Sam Chisholm was the failure of a far bigger MacKenzie gamble: Sky Sport's £10 million contract with the alleged boxer Chris Eubank.

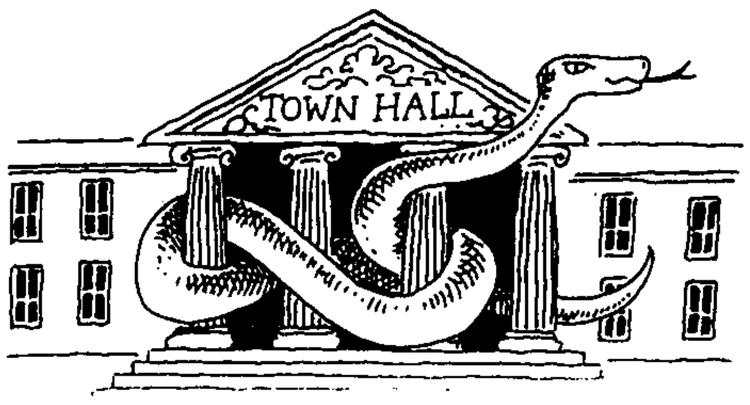
In return for this the Monocled Moron has only to defeat seven more patsys, each selected to produce almost no challenge. The problem is that viewers aren't interested in these joke contests; and real fight fans stayed away from Eubank's pathetic first bout against a Brazilian sacrificial victim called Mauricio Amaral in droves.

Even with masses of free tickets on offer, some inspired camera angles were needed to make Olympia look full of Eubank supporters. This was a pointless exercise as preliminary ratings suggest Sky viewers felt they had better things to watch on other channels.

Poor ticket sales for the Moron's next fight in Cardiff this month against Irishman Sam Storey are likely to be matched once again by lousy ratings for Sky — not least because Eubank is so little concerned about his hopeless challenger that his management felt able to suspend the "fighter's" training programme and send him on a promotional trip to South Africa.

MacKenzie may have been sacked — oops, resigned — but the consequences of offering Eubank such a daft fee to defect from ITV will remain for years ahead. Moreover, by promoting what is by any standards a travesty of sport, long-term damage has been done to the channel's reputation, which will make negotiating with serious sports bodies for exclusive rights all the harder. And the prospects for introducing Murdoch's much vaunted pay-per-view to a dubious customer base in the near future will also have been jeopardised by poor value offered to existing subscribers.





ROTTEN BOROUGHS

LAMBETH

WHILE the three main political parties dither over who will govern ungovernable Lambeth, town hall staff are wading through no fewer than 27 internal inquiries into council malpractice.

This is occupying 50 staff full time and costing around £1.5 million. Indeed, so many council departments are affected that town hall auditors claim that if any department *isn't* being investigated it is only because the investigators haven't got round to it yet, rather than because the department is working efficiently.

In true loony fashion the council has now decided to launch a new, 28th inquiry into why there are so many, er, inquiries.

BIRMINGHAM

THE CHAOS that passes for Birmingham's child care service has come up trumps again.

A confidential report to the city's child care committee by Paul Sutton, manager of the children and family service, reveals how in one case a girl entered care aged just one, 15 years ago, and was then moved 19 times between children's homes and foster families.

In all, she lived in six different children's homes and a similar number of foster families. At one point she was even sent back to her original parents where her father — a known sex abuser and criminal — abused her.

When, inevitably, she went off the rails social workers ignored her plight in favour of a power struggle over who should run her case, says the report. Now the girl, still only 16, is a fully-fledged crack addict and prostitute.

RENFREW

BORED residents in the constituency with the highest number of discos and unemployed people in central Scotland had a good laugh when the deputy Labour leader of the council, Paul Mack, was fined £200 at Paisley sheriff court.

Mack, 30, was found guilty of assaulting his 50-year-old ex-girlfriend and causing a breach of the peace at her home. His trial took a bizarre twist when he claimed he was lured to the house on false pretences, that she tried to catch him on film in a compromising position, and that her disco-owning brother — former professional footballer Alan Mackin — was hiding in the wardrobe with a video camera.

Mr Mackin denies being in his sister's wardrobe, let alone at her house, at the time of the incident and says Mack's claims are "preposterous".

Since he was elected in 1992 Mack's rise to power has been rapid. When elected deputy leader of the ruling Labour group this year he resigned as the youngest ever chairman of the licensing board, a fact reiterated in court when Mack claimed he had been the victim of a plot by a local publican to regain his late-night drinks licence.

Mack also now faces disciplinary action from his Labour comrades and calls for his resignation.

BARNSLEY

THE north's grimmest town has decided to make it easier for its inhabitants to escape by building a new airport — a perfect excuse for a municipal junket.

Shunning visits to the Manchester Ringway or Liverpool Speke airports, Barnsley Labour leader Hedley Salt, along with four councillors and three town hall officers, recently went on a vital 10-day fact-finding mission to find out about small town airports in north America.

They visited North Carolina and Maryland, and one hopes that Salt, despite clocking up a five-figure bill for local charge-payers, enjoyed the trip with good heart. As chairman of South Yorkshire's fire and civil defence authority, Salt was recently responsible for making 24 women cooks redundant to save a sum not unadjacent to the cost of the vital airports jaunt.

DOWN ON THE FARM

LAST September, shortly after her "elevation" to minister for the destruction of agriculture, the then untainted Gillian Shephard fronted a proposal to abolish the agricultural wages boards (AWBs) which set the minimum wages for farm workers (*Eye* 829).

Such was the outcry — from such unlikely allies as the National Farmers' Union and the Transport and General Workers Union — that it was widely thought a reprieve would be granted. By this May — a full 10 months after Shephard had made her pitch — the *Farmers' Guardian* was asking why it was taking so long.

The reason was a London School of Economics study commissioned by Shephard which, late last month, found that "they [the AWBs] have increased the wages of the low paid workers with no obvious adverse effects on employment."

As Shephard scuttled off to the education department, it was left to David Hunt at the department of employment to announce that the government intended to ignore the study and press on with dismantling the boards. With despicable cowardice, the announcement was timed to coincide with Mr Major's cabinet reshuffle when the media was otherwise preoccupied.

Beneficiaries will include some of the less scrupulous Lincolnshire gangmasters, who have been only too keen to evade wages set 24 per cent below average industrial levels (*Eye* 832). The demise of the AWBs will sanction their paying poverty rates in a captive labour market. To such depths has the government sunk.

IF THE craven Mrs Shephard was glad to bottle out of making an announcement on AWBs, she would have been doubly relieved to have escaped the fall-out of her great BSE "victory", leaving her Maffia successor, William "open government" Waldegrave, to clean up her mess.

Set the task of preventing the Germans banning British beef, Shephard "negotiated" a settlement which makes it virtually impossible to sell cow meat — the bulk of the EC export trade — anywhere in Europe. In effect, not only has she given the Germans the ban they wanted (without them having to justify themselves in the European court), but she has extended it to the whole of the EC. Such is the measure of this useless minister.

As a result prices for cull cows have tumbled by as much as £100 an animal. Those few sellers who are able to prove that their beasts have come from a herd proved BSE-free for the last six years will command a premium. But these account for less than 10 per cent of the cull cattle sold, owing to the difficulty in getting the required paperwork together.

But the ministry for the destruction of agriculture — never better named — will be pleased with Shephard's work. Under extreme pressure to show BSE is declining, it knows that farmers with BSE-free herds will be extremely reluctant to report new cases. With an average herd of 60 cattle, a dairy farmer can expect to dispose of at least 12 cull cows a year. Those with BSE herds expect to lose £1,200 a year or more. Compensation will not make up this loss.

Thus it will be more profitable to ship animals showing early signs of BSE to the market or abattoir, keeping up the disease-free status. The Maffia will, of course, keep secret the reduced number of new herds going down with BSE — ably assisted by its new minister with his experience of "open government". As BSE figures decline, the Maffia will then parade its "success" in controlling the epidemic, while ever-increasing numbers of BSE animals enter the food chain.

THE uselessness of the previous tenant of Whitehall Place is matched only by the grovelling praises sung of her by the agri-mags such as *Pharmers' Weekly*, and the obsequious welcomes afforded to the new occupant, William Waldegrave.

One of the great disasters in the farming "industry" is the failure of specialist journals to represent fully the key issues in farming. To all intents and purposes, the magazines simply provide cover for their chemical and machinery paymasters to advertise their wares.

So it was not surprising that when a group of conservationists, including Jonathon Porrit and Hugh Raven, joined leading farmers — not least of whom was former NFU president Simon Gourlay — under the title of *The Gay Hussar Group*, there was little mention of them in the farming press.

That they headed their agenda "Countryside in Crisis" probably gave the clue to the antipathy. Their message is that agriculture should batten down the hatches and reduce usage of poison chemicals and earth-destroying machinery — the very last thing agri-biz and its media apologists want farmers to hear.

'New Muckspreader'

Old Macdonald

ALBERT

WHO THE HELL'S DUMPED THAT THERE?
BEAUTY SPOT
BLOODY MARVELLOUS ISN'T IT! I SUPPOSE AS 'GUARDIANS OF THE COUNTRYSIDE 'WE'RE EXPECTED TO GET ONE OF OUR LADS OUT TO TAKE IT TO THE TIP!
THANKLESS TASK RENÉ.
BEAUTY SPOT

DOING THE ROUNDS

THE Calverton fundholding GP practice in Nottinghamshire has achieved some jolly impressive reductions in its waiting times for referral to outpatient clinics.

In the following list, the waiting times for patients at nearby *non*-fundholding practices are given in brackets for easy comparison.

Neurology: two weeks at Calverton, 12 weeks elsewhere; ophthalmology: one week (17 weeks); gynaecology: two weeks (8); orthopaedics: two weeks (42); rheumatology: 2 (6); ear, nose and throat: 2 (31).

As former Calverton partner Professor Tom O'Dowd put it: "I have always been uncomfortable about this aspect of the healthcare reforms, whereby those who choose — for good reasons — not to be fundholders feel their patients are missing out. It's almost a lucky break for those who find themselves in fundholding practices."

● YVONNE MOORES, the **department of health's** chief nursing officer, has got through three deputies in under 18 months. The latest casualty is the much respected Ainna Fawcett-Henesy, whose practical achievements and wide experience as a primary care adviser left Mrs Moores upstaged and exposed. A DoH spokesman said: "Ms Fawcett-Henesy was not sacked. It was just decided that the secondment wasn't working out."

● IN **GLASGOW**, a patient with severe heart disease living in the impoverished Easterhouse housing scheme has been attending the cardiovascular risk factor clinic at **Glasgow Royal Infirmary** in the hope of being considered for a heart transplant.

His hopes have been dampened by a sensitively crafted letter from clinical research fellow J. Hannah. "I discussed with Professor Lorimer today the possibility of your referral to the Heart Transplant Unit. Unfortunately, the age limit for referral is 50, therefore I am afraid you are not eligible."

● AT **YORK district trust hospital**, 25 student nurses staged an all night "sleep out" to protest against plans to evict them from hospital accommodation if they do not agree to a tripling of the monthly rent to £145. The trust's housing

"I'm afraid you still have cancer, even now you've gone private"

manager, who claims the new rent is "nearer the market value", has possibly overlooked the fact that the nurses only earn £360 a month.

● STAFF at **Torquay's Edith Morgan Centre psychiatric unit** have passed a vote of no confidence in the management after occupational therapist Georgina Robinson was stabbed to death. The staff feel the centre is neither safe nor therapeutic, that some of the admissions are "inappropriate" and that **South Devon healthcare trust** has been slow to improve matters.

● THE **King's Fund** has called for an immediate halt to acute bed reductions in London after a study found "grave problems" (*sic*) with emergency admissions, intense pressure on casualty departments, lengthy stop-overs on corridor trolleys and rising waiting lists for elective procedures.

Chief executive Robert Maxwell said: "There has been a loss of morale among hospital staff, who sense that deals are being done behind closed doors."

These pronouncements will bring little relief to the staff of **St Bartholomew's hospital**, who have lost their high court action to stay open. Services are due to be transferred to the **Royal London hospital** at a projected cost of £144 million. Meanwhile, **North Thames regional health authority** has decided to convert a brand new 28-bed NHS ward at **Westminster and Chelsea hospital** into a 15-bed private unit.

EMBARRASSING FACTS

● At **Manchester's Whittington hospital**, a man died on his way to an emergency operation after being trapped in a lift for 40 minutes.

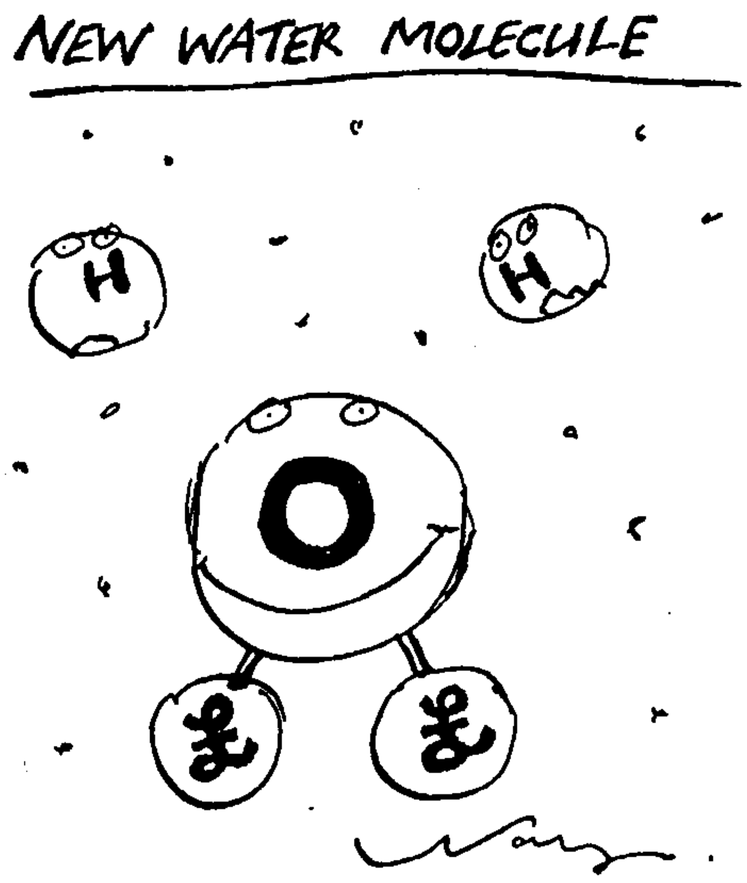
● At **Wembley Community hospital**, an 83-year-old disabled woman was found drowned and scalded in the bath after being left unattended for 10 minutes. **Parkside NHS trust** has been fined £50,000 and ordered to pay £6,000 after admitting it "failed to conduct itself in a manner to protect those not in its employment". Not surprising when 21 patients are being looked after by just two nurses.

● **Stafford family health services authority** has decided to communicate drug alerts and urgent messages to GPs in the area by phone, rather than letter. Before doing so managers decided to insult local practice staff by checking if they were intelligent enough to take down phone messages accurately. Each practice was phoned and given the following message: "Seventy-five years ago the Ministry of Health Act 1919 established the Ministry of Health. The minister was the right honourable Christopher Addisson and the chief medical officer was Dr George Newman." A second phone call followed later to check the message. FACT: 85 percent of a GP receptionist's time is spent recording accurate messages.

● THE **British Medical Association** (yearly surplus: £3.4 million) has reinforced its commitment to junior doctors by refusing to fund a national helpline for those buckling under the strain. It couldn't afford the £250,000 needed to set it up.

● IN THE LAST 18 months, 17 people have been killed by severely mentally ill patients being "cared" for in the community, according to the Zito trust.

M.D.



WATER NEWS

SEVERN Trent's ex-chief executive John Bellak, who earned a regular place in the headlines for his salary and bonuses, left in another blast of publicity when he received a £512,000 pay-off — as well as the £226,000 he made last year on share options and his £230,000 salary.

This was his reward for increasing water bills by 70 per cent and making 1,000 staff redundant — but how did the talented Mr Bellak land such a poorly-paid job?

Until 1983 he had spent most of his life in the porcelain industry, and so it was a little strange when the government suddenly made him chairman of the Severn Trent water authority. It was of course only a coincidence that he was also an active member of the Tory party (including being a West Midlands regional organiser), and that he had twice tried and failed to be selected as a Tory candidate — oh, and that he numbered cabinet members among his closest friends.

IT'S spend, spend, spend at Northumbrian Water, one of the most "successful" new monopolies, which is finally rewarding those who have worked hard to increase company profits.

Up goes chief executive David Cranston's annual salary by a tad more than the rate of inflation (16.2 percent) to a modest £150,000. Former commercial director Mike Guerin, meanwhile, receives £184,000 compensation for loss of office — after he voluntarily resigned!

The company has also been paying out big sums to sponsor local organisations like Sunderland "university", Durham University Business School... and Durham County Cricket Club. But customers need not worry about the pay-outs or any rise in their water bills: their interests are in safe hands.

Northumbrian Water has a vigilant customer liaison panel under the self-proclaimed "independent" chairmanship of Don Robson, leader of Durham council... and chairman of Durham CCC, one of the main recipients of Northumbrian Water sponsorship. This puts him in an excellent position to keep tabs on the company's spending.

HUSBAND

Letters

By George

Sir,

I notice in EYE *851 an advertisement for "Granta" on page 3, carrying a quote from Martin Amis: "By the age of forty everyone has the face they deserve." Oddly enough, George Orwell made a similar, but more grammatical comment: "At fifty, everyone has the face he deserves." (Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters, Vol.4, p.579, Penguin edition.)*

Sadly, Orwell died within a year of writing this remark.

Yours faithfully,
P.A. GILROY,
Bramley, Leeds.

Pension fun

Sir,

I am a supporter of the EYE *which made reading your article "The Big Brum Pension Swindle" even more hurtful. However, even the* EYE *can make mistakes of fact and I would like to point out some fundamental errors in the article, which is highly defamatory and I feel that the record should be put straight.*

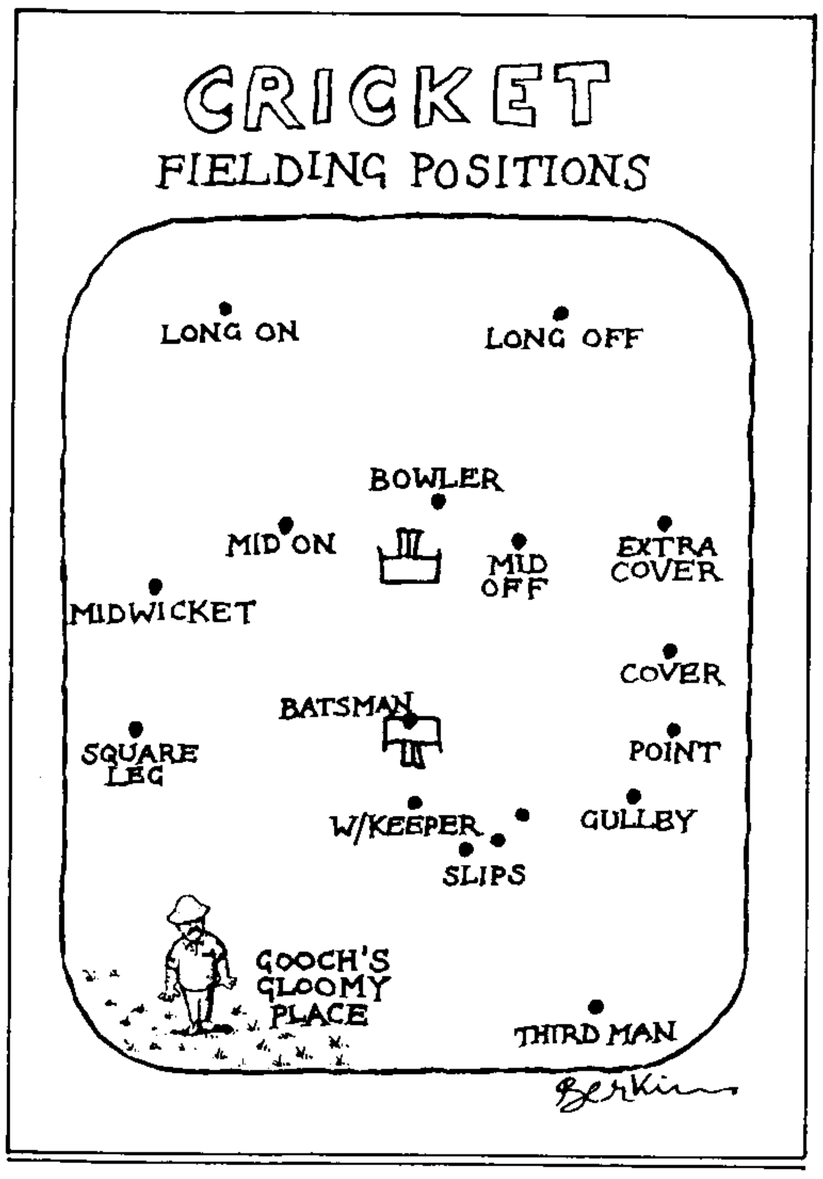
For most of the period up to receivership there was a third pension trustee who was not a representative of Teampace. Furthermore, the secretary of the scheme was almost throughout a shop-floor representative and additionally we also acted with the benefit of advice from an independent actuary.

It is simply untrue that £2 million or indeed, even one penny, vanished. No monies vanished — every penny was accounted for. A minority proportion of the pension fund had been invested in acquiring two of the company's freehold factories, which at the time were regarded as valuable assets and good acquisitions for the pensioners. Regrettably, like so many others, we then fell victim to the recession which nobody was predicting. Property values plummeted. If the properties remain within the scheme, not having been sold by the independent trustee, and if these are sold when values increase, any short-fall could be recovered.

As for the executive pension scheme, we paid back what we received from the Teampace fund.

I believe that most beneficiaries under the Teampace scheme received their entitlements in terms of paid up pensions. Equally, I understand that, very unfortunately, some of the pensioners have not received their full pensions which is something I personally deeply regret.

Yours faithfully,
KENNETH SHAW,
London W1.



Lookalike

Flintstone **Clarke**

Sir,

Have any readers noticed the similarity between Fred Flintstone and Kenneth Clarke?

One is a bulky, boorish caveman with a funny accent, strange-looking wife and the financial skill of a diplodocus. The other is a Stone Age cartoon character. Are they possibly related?

Best wishes,
TIM HARRISON,
Kingston, Surrey.

Very shifty

Sir,

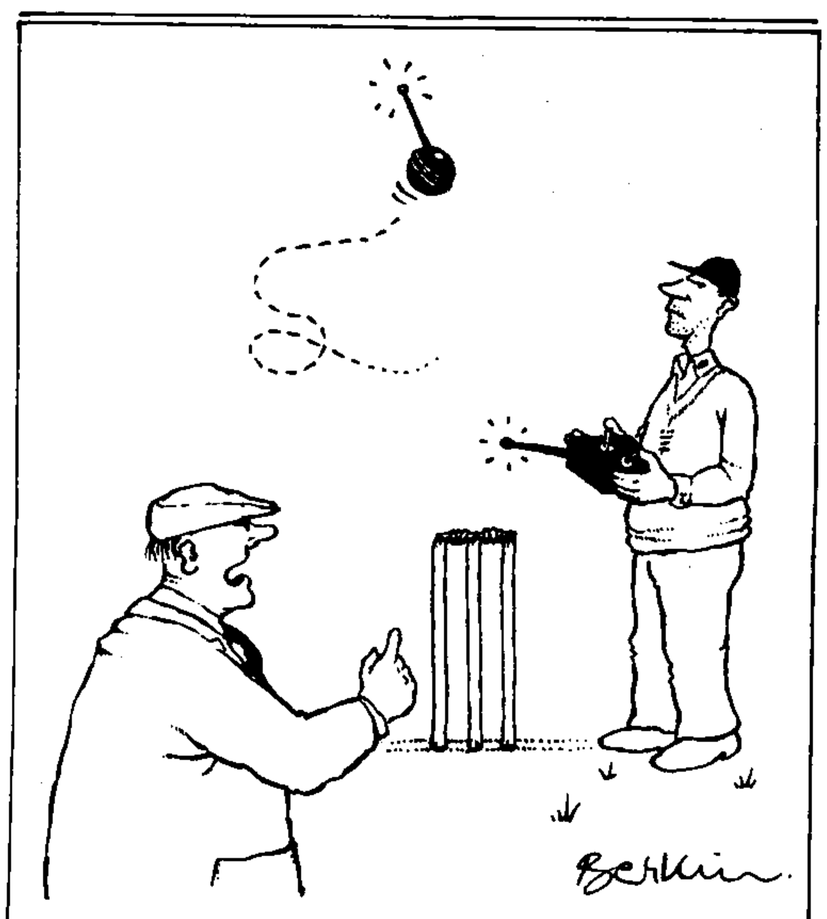
What a relief it must be for Sky subscribers that they are, in head of programming David Elstein's words, "not tied down to a single screening" of their film "premieres".

My own memory of working at Sky's customer service department is that, of the many requests to terminate Sky subscriptions, the most frequent reason given was the endless repeats of movies, usually in increasingly butchered form. One of the pisspoor excuses we were told to use, while doing everything possible not to do what the customer wanted, was that Sky repeats were for the benefit of "shift-workers".

I also recall much irritation at the heavy marketing given to premieres of anonymous made-for-TV crap. This presumably would be Mr Elstein's charitable policy of "always identifying the first screening of any film we license — including TV movies".

If any readers wish to find out the latest excuses, the number is 0506 460000.

Yours faithfully,
ALEX WILTON,
Edinburgh.



"Excuse me! Do you mind if I have a look at that ball?"

Poor repeat performance

Sir,

*Who does David Elstein think he's kidding (*EYE *851)?*

Surely the reason Sky Television shows the same film 12 times in 12 months at different times, etc... is not because "subscribers are not tied down to viewing a single screening," but more to do with the crap the earthbound stations have been telling us for years.

"We can't be bothered so here's another bloody repeat."

Yours not watching and in ignorance,
MR M.A. HATCHELL,
Islington N12.

PS: What the hell does "Si post fata venit gloria non propero" mean? [Garry Bushell's letter]

Serial killer

Sir,

Get real Garry Bushell. There were never THREE *gags in Brian Conley's TV series!!*

Yours without the Latin crap,
NIGEL SANDERS,
Headington, Oxford.

Lunacy

Sir,

Following "Doing the Rounds" last week pointing out the dismay of the staff in the Kidderminster Health Care NHS Trust at their being at the bottom of Mrs Bottomley's statistics, I am happy to tell you that we have now solved the problem. This involves adopting a new definition of the word "month". In future we shall be using not the calendar or lunar month but the NHS month, in which there are an infinitely variable number of days calculated by dividing the out-patient waiting time by a number less than three. We believe this formula to be in general use within the National Health Service already!

Yours faithfully,
MR L.P. GLOSSOP FRCS,
Consultant ENT Surgeon, Kidderminster General Hospital.

Fan-tastic

Sir,

*Square Eye's article (*EYE *851) was very unfair towards Danny Baker. To compare anyone to Jonathon Ross is just disgusting.*

Yours sincerely,
EMILIO VERRECCHIA,
Founder, Danny Baker Fan Club.

Mouth piece

Sir,

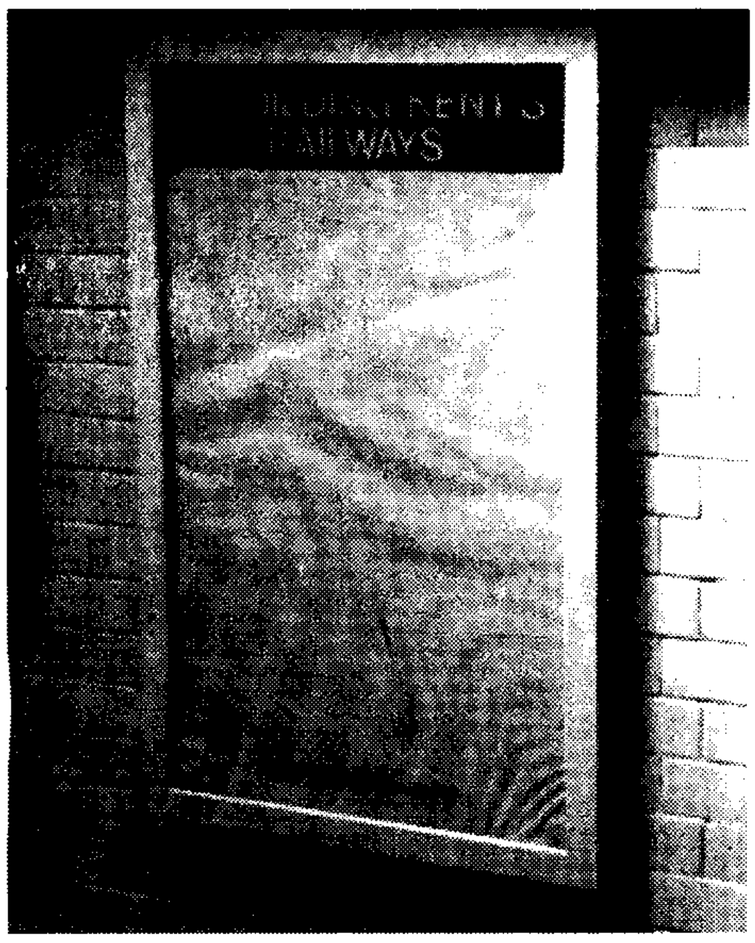
I think it might benefit Ray Illingworth to take a look at the front cover of Saturday's DAILY TELEGRAPH *(70p, alas), and probably every other national daily concerned with England's latest cricketing fiasco.*

Also last Wednesday's programme THE HUMAN ANIMAL, *which provided at least one useful fact in 50 minutes — that putting your hand over your mouth means "attempted deception" or dishonesty.*

I think Mike Atherton should speak to his press adviser before doing any more poses for the camera.

Yours faithfully,
JENNY WILLIAMS,
Clwyd.

I-SPY *Faversham Station*



Submitted by Mark Leggett. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Spring fever

Sir,

The people who live in Wales and get their water from Severn Trent are positively fortunate compared to some people who live in England, ie Herefordshire. Here we face the appalling monopoly service of Welsh Water, which underwent an expensive programme of "diversification", is the UK's second most expensive water company, and refuses to stop adding aluminium sulphate (of Camelford fame) to Hereford's water supply.

Citizens of Montgomeryshire may be the unfair victims of a hosepipe ban, but they saved a fortune by being fortunate enough to be classified as part of an English river basin 20 years ago. Herefordshire, by contrast, was classified as part of a Welsh river system, presumably as a QUID PRO QUO.

Would that we could purchase water and sewage treatment for "only" what Severn Trent charges. Here it costs £300 and is rising fast, and you still have to go to a nearby spring on the side of a hill if you want something drinkable.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID OLIVIER,
Moreton-on-Lugg, Hereford.

O·B·N

Her radiance glowed like a light shining through a shell. Beauty like that may be influenced by a mood, enhanced by the light, set off by a certain style of dress. But real beauty is to do with the soul, the personality.

It was as if she had decided that her beauty was not to be used as a weapon but nurtured and bestowed, offered as a gift.

ANNA RAEBURN
(on Princess Diana)
Hello

He will re-emerge in a powerful job in newspapers, because his talent is simply too great and too glittering to be wasted.

SIR DAVID ENGLISH
(on Kelvin MacKenzie)
UK Press Gazette

Submitted by Nicola Ring, E. Strobes.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Lyon's share

Sir,

*Birmingham city council's new chief executive, Michael Lyons, is taking 13 days holiday in August — not the full month (*PRIVATE EYE, *29 July) — and this is certainly not costing the council £8,000. He is entitled to a set amount of holiday pay whenever he chooses to take his holiday between his starting date on 18 July and the end of the council's leave year in March 1995. It is fortunate for the council that he had chosen to take his leave during the quietest period when committees do not meet.*

But you are right to say I recognise that Mr Lyons is a "terribly talented chap" — so did both Labour and Conservative councils in Wolverhampton and Nottinghamshire where he previously served as chief executive.

Yours faithfully,
CLLR THERESA STEWART,
Leader of Birmingham City Council.

Porridge pot

Sir,

I have been suffering occasional fits of uncontrollable giggling since seeing the whinge from Sir Nicholas Lloyd in your letters column. "Why don't you check your facts?" demands the editor of Britain's favourite crusading newspaper. Meanwhile his hacks are giving poor sods like me a terrible time by writing inaccurate articles about how we are in the pockets of rich and well connected prisoners.

The words "pot" and "kettle" come to mind.

Yours sincerely,
D.A. GODFREY,
Governor, H M Prison, Arundel.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"There is certainly more in the future now than back in 1964."
ROGER DALTREY, Radio 1
(Robert Crawford)

"And now, excuse me while I interrupt myself."
MURRAY WALKER, BBC2
(J. Phillips)

"The government are shrugging their feet over this issue."
DOUG HOYLE MP, BBC2
(P.A. Spindloe)

"It's no use trying to pin a donkey on a few individuals, however much Lord Justice Scott wants to."
ALAN CLARKE, Channel 4
(Kevin Harrison)

Dave Lee Travis: *Is it a part-time evening job?*
Caller: *Yes.*
DLT: *When do you work, then?*
Caller: *Evenings...*
Minster FM
(Peter Quinn)

UN NEWS

PROVOKED by what the last *Eye* said about Yasushi Akashi, the UN's viceroy in the Balkans, numerous UN staff have rushed forward to attack him further.

The complaints have a common thread: that Akashi is arrogant, a megalomaniac... and ineffectual. The only defence offered is that he models himself on his boss, UN secretary-general Boutros Boutros Ghali.

As Boo Boo's "special representative", Akashi was so conscious of his "dignity" he insisted on special number plates, SRSG1. However, he shares paranoia as well as megalomania with his boss, so when it was pointed out that this made him a prime target for any Balkan type with a grudge, he changed them for normal UN issue.

However, also like his boss he is not that clever. To support home industries he is chauffeured around in Zagreb's only Toyota Crown — and always with a massive escort convoy so that even the dimmest Serb artilleryman would have little difficulty pinpointing him. Not of course that the Serbs would have any reason to attack their best friend.

Akashi is essentially unsackable for the simple reason that he represents the Samurai spirit in the UN — and the Japanese pay a sizable chunk of the UN budget. At one time scorned by the Japanese foreign ministry as "that locally recruited chap at the UN," he networked well in New York and soon became the ranking Japanese in the organisation. Tokyo overcame its scruples and gave him ambassadorial rank so that he could be guaranteed a job as UN under secretary-general. He has met the exacting house standards for mediocrity and compromise.

In Cambodia he was in charge of the UN's supervision of the peace agreement, and his policy amounted to letting the Khmer Rouge kill anyone who tried to vote. Since arriving in Zagreb to head Unprofor he has treated the boys from Belgrade as honorary members of the Khmer Rouge to be deferred to in every way.

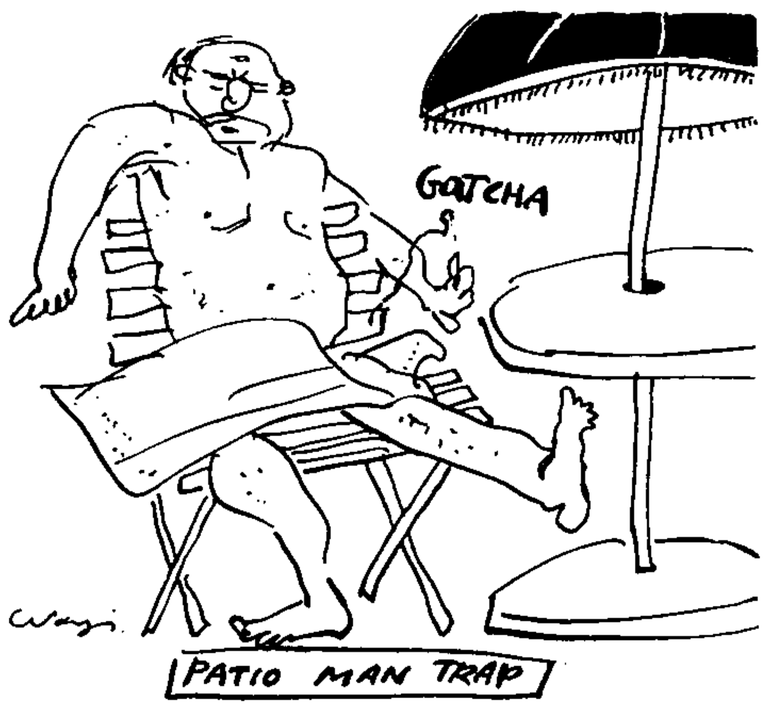
The other piece of the Orient he has brought with him is a Japanese garden with a pergola, described by some as a pagoda. When he heard that a financial investigative team was coming from UN HQ, he ordered its copper roof to be painted to disguise its expense. However, the massive amounts spent on furnishing his offices were obvious to the many jealous staff risking their lives daily, and to the refugees starving in cities which he refused to stop the Serbs besieging.

Staff complain they have to fill in huge barricades of paperwork to get the simplest things approved. One requisition for field defences classified as an "Immediate Operational Requirement" took four months to process. It they had requisitioned an armour-plated pergola, labelling it for the headquarters' garden, they would have had it immediately.

Despite the paperwork, whenever cash has to be transferred it is carried by hand by any staff member travelling in the general direction that it's needed. But then James Baldie, who is in charge of administration, clearly likes the personal touch. Faced with thousands of highly qualified refugees, Mr Baldie decided the most appropriate candidate as his chief officer was, er, a certain Mrs Baldie.

HOM SAP BY DAVID AUSTIN

FUNNY OLD WORLD



● "We've always been big fans of the show," Joanna Nath told reporters from her bed in the intensive care unit of Toronto's Sunnybrook Hospital. "But we're both mature adults and, on reflection, we think it's best not to watch it together any more."

Mrs Nath and her husband Billy had been rushed by ambulance to the hospital the previous night, after spending an evening watching television. A spokesman for the hospital explained: "It seems that, during *Married With Children*, an argument began about which actress was better looking. Mrs Nath liked the mother Peg Bundy, but Mr Nath preferred the teenage daughter Kelly. A fight broke out, with Mrs Nath breaking her husband's left arm, severing the tendons in his left hand with a knife, and slashing him in the stomach and groin with a broken wine bottle.

"Rather than go to hospital, Mr Nath let his wife staunch the flow of blood and generally patch him up, and they settled down to watch TV again. Unfortunately, another episode of *Married With Children* came on, the fight was renewed, and this time Mrs Nath was stabbed in the chest, back and legs, and her right arm was almost completely severed just below the shoulder. Only after watching the shopping channel for 30 minutes did they finally decide to call an ambulance."

"What do the TV companies think they're playing at?" Mr Nath demanded. "Showing programmes like that is irresponsible. People could get hurt." His condition was described as critical but stable. *(Toronto Globe and Mail, 18/4/94. Spotter — Greg Turko.)*

— ● —

● "It was the hot bath that did it," pensioner Ron Tupper told a local reporter, as members of the Eastbourne Fire Brigade struggled to free him. "Hot water's always made my apricots sag, and that's where the problem started."

Tupper, a resident of Old Orchard Road, Eastbourne, explained what had happened to him that morning: "I'd just got out of the bath, and thought I'd sun myself on the patio before I got dressed. I sat down on a chair with the *Daily Express*, but my balls sack was loose because of the hot water, and my tessies slipped between the slats of the seat. I didn't pay any heed at first but, when I tried to stand, the skin had tightened up again, and I couldn't get them out.

"Realising I was stuck, I scuttled back into the house on the chair, and phoned the fire brigade. They were here for over an hour. They tried greasing me and all sorts, but it was no good. So they hacked the chair to pieces, which is a pity because it's one of a set I bought from Timothy Whites, and you can't get them anymore. It's cold showers for me from now on." *(Eastbourne Herald, 7/5/94. Spotter — Tim Clifford)*

— ● —

● *"The wise men say — 'If you must drink, do not drive'," Uncle Douglas told readers of the Gweru Times. "But I say, if you drink you must eat every day or not at all, otherwise you will drive yourself only to the mortuary."*

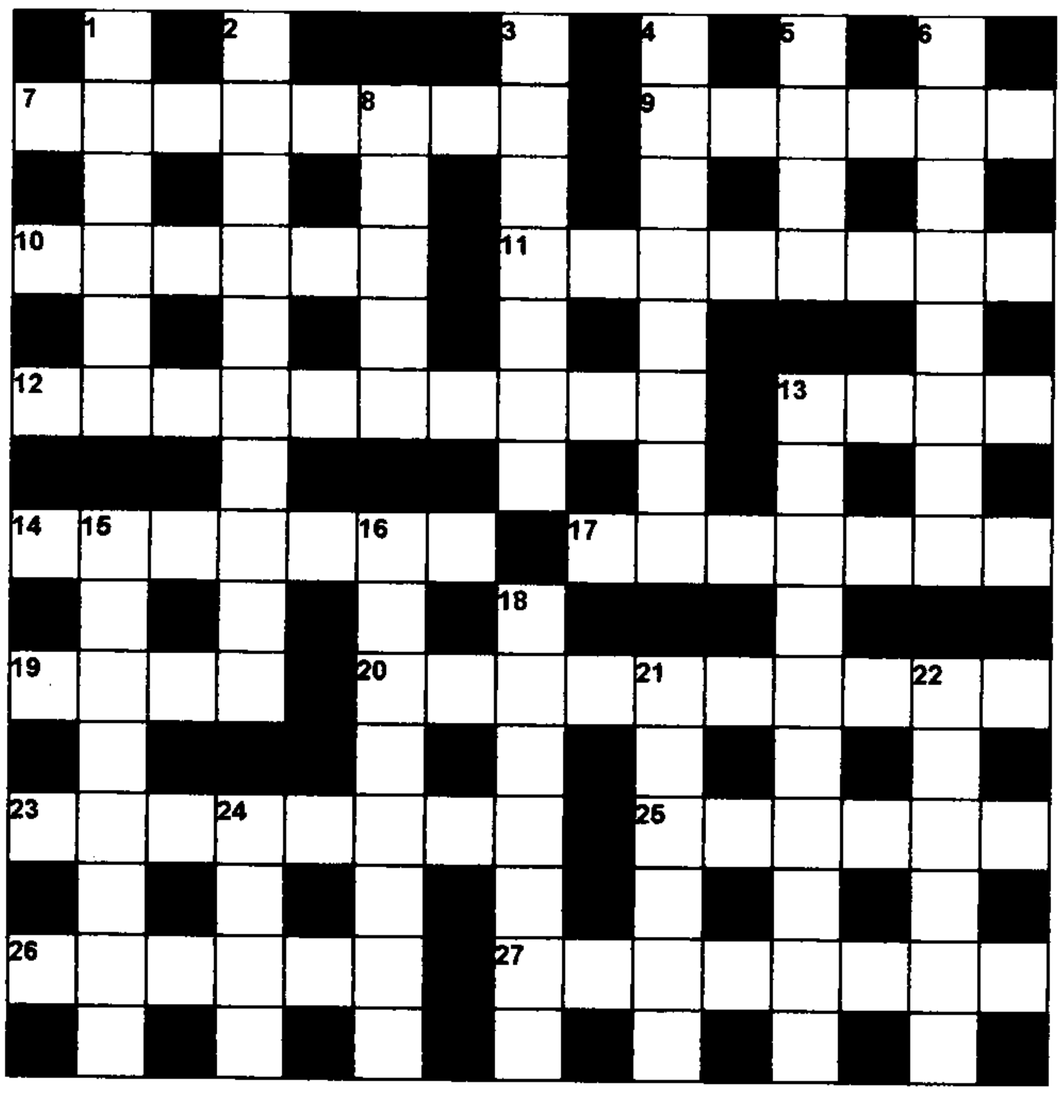
Writing in his regular advice column in the paper, he continued: "A certain heavy drinker in Harare shunned all food in favour of beer, until his friends became alarmed for him. So one day, when he came to the bar, they held him on the ground and forced much sausage and millet down his throat, out of concern for his health. But, oh the spirits of the sky, a few days later, a loud explosion was heard coming from the man's toilet function area making a crack louder even than the wrathful snapping bill of the pelican.

"The concerned friends who gave him sausage and millet rushed him hurriedly to hospital but it was too late, and he died in terrible pain. A post-mortem showed that his intestines had shrunk until they only allowed liquids through. When the sausage and millet was forced down his throat, the intestines had swollen and burst. What a poor way of dying. Strange but true. Remember, all that Uncle Douglas tells you is true." (Gweru Times [Zimbabwe], 2/4/94. Spotter — Mark Dawson)

Compiled by
Victor Lewis-Smith

EYE CROSSWORD 8 by Cyclops

£100 Winner C.M. PEARSON



ACROSS

7/20 Maybe a sweeper who believes Charlie would have article dropped (8,2,3,5)
9 Make your personal statement here, readers, with a 'Yes' (3,3)
10 A product of apartheid, thus Thatcher opponent gets sod all (6)
11 Personal jewellery with which to indulge burning desire (8)
12 Part of the monthly figures not used (10)
13 Hospital in cover-up — Tory opponent (4)
14 Being an embryonic champion, so unwelcome at certain clinics! (3-4)
17 Fanny just wouldn't be seen wearing one (1-6)
19 Reporter's farewell cut short (4)
20 (see 7)
23 Any UK lab could balls up a Soviet cooler (8)
25 Womble's kinky demand for oral sex? That's a bit of a shock! (4,2)
26 Willy has scorch mark — time to put an end to it! (6)
27 It's Rupert's alternative to tits and topless theme (3,5)

DOWN

1 Joan of Arc, having disposed of English, gets smack (6)
2 Eric Temple, crappy columnist of global awfulness (5,5)
3 Where devilish parents switch to Sky One, right? (7)
4 EC, embroiled in foreign shit, needs second prestige vehicle (8)
5 New European to prepare for knighthood, apparently (4)
6 Authorise use of ineffective UN measure? (8)
8 Lord Owen's first drunken slobber (5)
13 One who's forever on the job (10)
15 Cultural watchdogs angry-looking over *Minder* (3,5)
16 Just one item from our contributor, often too pissed... (8)
18 ... to knock off Ted Heath initially in hi-tech aircraft (7)
21 Resemble Major somewhat — what does this signify? (6)
22 Yet I'm mad with love for this Tory philanderer (3,3)
24 Pull Jerry Hall, for instance? (4)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 10.8.94 Send entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 7

ACROSS: 8 Codpiece 9 (see 1) 10 Tyrant 11 Additive 12 (see 18) 14 Beith 16 Red Card 18/12 Cabinet Reshuffle 20 Roman 21 Testicles 24 Stormont 25 Weirdo 27 Clark 28 Orifices.

DOWN: 1/9 Tony Blair 2 Splash 3/22 Betty Ford Clinic 4 Debacle 5 Abode 6 Galtieri 7 Private Eye 13 Eye Contact 15 Party Whip 17 Chairman 19 Bent Cop 22 (see 3) 23 Nooky 26 Diet.

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

Let there be no doubt that the corner has been turned. As I pointed out to my wife Norman this morning: "Since my great triumph in Corfu, the whole political scene has changed completely out of recognition." "Yes," she replied. "Then Mr Smith was 36 points ahead in the polls, now Mr Blair is 48 points ahead." "No," I patiently explained, in the same voice that I use in the House of Commons when I open my ringbinder and read out what Miss Hogg has told me to say. "Six weeks ago everyone was saying that I was useless. Now they are not saying that any more." "That is because they are on holiday," said Norman in a very unhelpful way. I decided to finish my Fruit-Loops without talking to her.

Tuesday

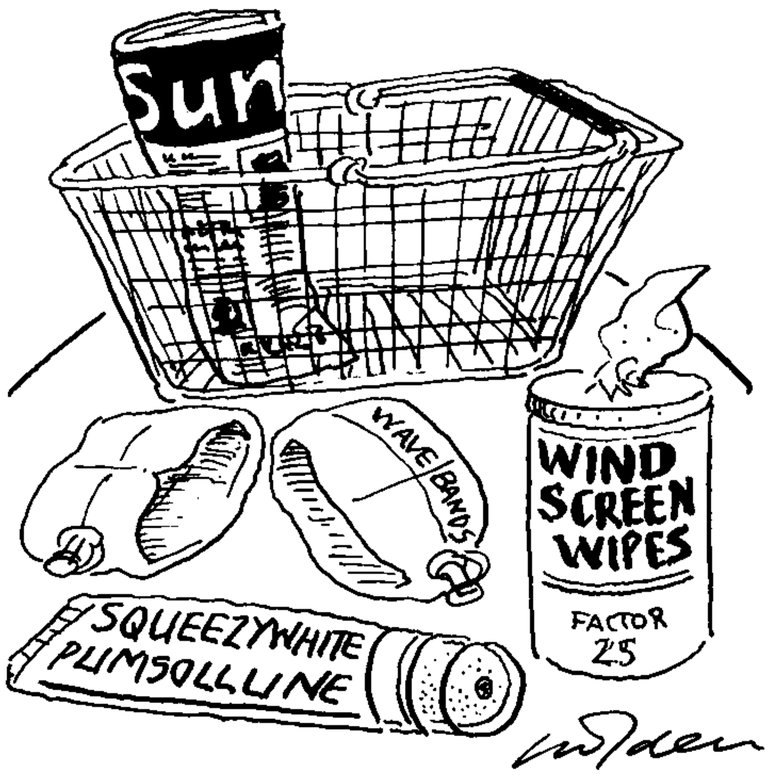
I am in no small measure considerably annoyed with my brother Terry, who has allowed himself to be made a fool of by writing a book about me just because I am his brother. I have now read the whole book and it is quite obvious that, to sell lots of copies, the publishers have persuaded him to make me out as a very boring person who never did anything interesting until I became prime minister. For example, on page 28, it says that Terry once kicked a football over the fence and broke a pane of glass in Mr Catchpole's greenhouse (our nextdoor neighbour). In fact, it was me who kicked the ball over. Terry was not even there. And, what is more, the ball didn't break anything. Mr Catchpole gave me the ball back, and said: "Try to be more careful in future." I think you will agree that this is a lot more interesting than the way Terry tells the story! When I rang Terry to point this out, he was in a very excitable state and said that he had no time to talk because he was just going down to Croydon to be interviewed on Radio Purley FM by their most famous disc-jockey Kevin Patel. "Be sure to catch it, John," he said. "it is on 89.34KHz and you should be able to pick it up if you take your radio up to the roof and point it in the direction of Purley." Oh dear, it is sad how when an ordinary person suddenly becomes famous, it goes to their head. Before we know it he will be on Desert Island Discs, going on about cricket and embarrassing everybody.

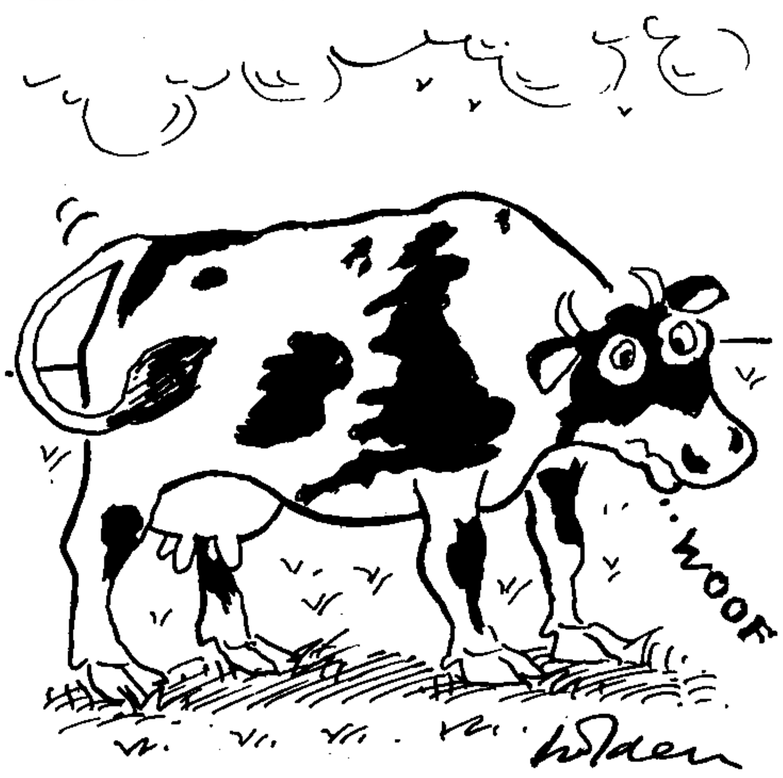
Wednesday

Today Mr Meyer told me that I have to go to a place called Lithuania, but not for a holiday. Oh no. My work is never done, except when I go on holiday, which is at the end of the week. I could not find Lithuania on my Daily Telegraph wall map, but Mr Hurd explained that this was because it used to be in Russia. It is a very small country and not very important, so I was very glad when we came back in the afternoon, after I had had my picture taken with a dull man who is the prime minister. After a while these people all look the same to me!

Thursday

I was very shocked to see on this morning's GMTV (which Norman insists on watching because she likes Eammon and Penny although I prefer Mr Hobday on the wireless, except when they are being rude to Mrs Bottomley, who is only doing her job) that our new Minister of Agriculture Mr Waldegrave has got Mad Cow disease. "Is that what they call BSE?" asked Norman. "No," I said, "that is what people watch the cricket on when it is in the West Indies." When I rang Mr Waldegrave to express my sympathy, he said that it was not him that had the disease but his cows. He has obviously gone completely off his head, imagining that he is a farmer instead of a member of my Cabinet. It is very worrying how quickly this madness spreads. Talking of which, guess who turned up on the GMTV sofa? — my brother Terry. This time he was telling the famous story of the time he borrowed my white plimsolls on a very hot day, and when he came back for tea they were all covered in tar. And I was supposed to have got very cross, which is a complete and utter lie. In fact, he never borrowed the shoes from me since they were his in the first place, and anyway it could not have been tea-time, because I remember that I was up in my room that afternoon looking at my collection of Player's 50 Famous Cricketers cigarette cards. Honestly, if GMTV want an interesting story, they should come to me!





Friday

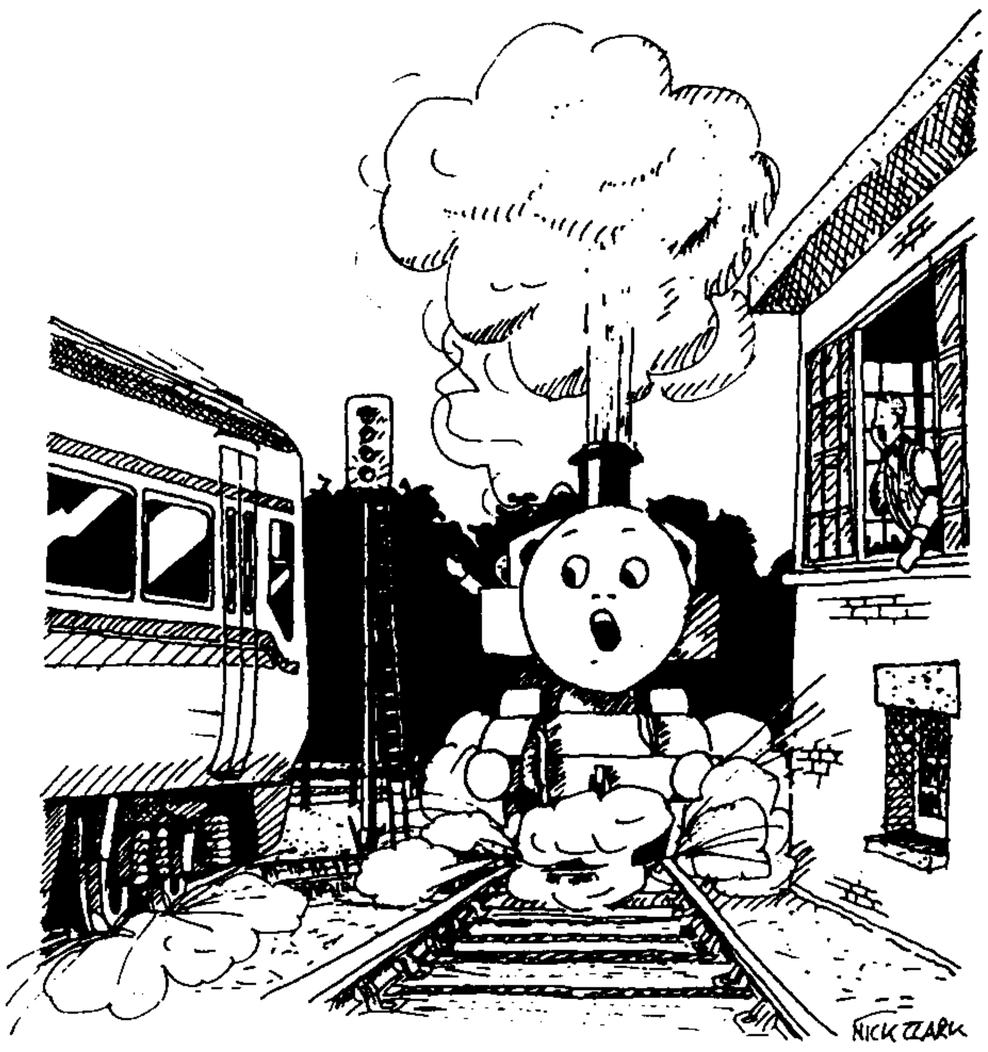
At last we are on holiday! We flew this morning to our favourite villa in Algarvia, which is near Portugal. It is such a relief to get completely away from politics and the media for two weeks! When we arrived I walked down to the local store which is called Los Tescos, where they have English newspapers, and I was not inconsiderably annoyed to see that all of them had headlines saying Portfolio Lashes Hezza — Big Two Fight It Out. It seems that Mr Portfolio has written a very rude letter to Mr Heseltine, saying that he is not doing his job properly. I immediately bought all the papers and took them back to show Norman, who was sitting by the pool reading Terry's book and laughing out loud. "I like this picture of your pet squirrel Cyril taken in 1955," she said. "It was not my squirrel, it was Terry's," I pointed out, "and anyway it was not called Cyril, it was called Robert." "And what is more," I said, "now is not a time to laugh. Look what these two are doing at home, as soon as my back is turned. Why are they fighting each other?" "Over who is to lead the Party," said Norman. "That is silly," I told her, "when I am already the leader of the Party." Then we went to the local taverna for a glass of their beer, which is called Oranjeboom.

JUST FANCY THAT

THOMAS

THE PRIVATISED TANK ENGINE

Skeleton Service



"WE'RE doing our best to run a normal service, but please bear with us," the Fat Controller told Thomas's passengers one Wednesday morning.

But when Thomas was under way he had to apply his brakes abnormally hard. He had been switched onto the wrong track. "Phew," he gasped as he screeched to a halt six inches from Selina the Sprinter Unit. "I could swear that signal was green."

"Sorry chaps! My fault," called an unfamiliar voice from the signal box. "These traffic lights are dashed complicated. But at least we're keeping things on the move, eh?"

THE following week Thomas had to stay in the station all day, sunbathing on full pay.

"This strike is nothing to do with me, oh yes," the Grey Controller was explaining to Thomas's angry passengers. "It's entirely a matter for the Fat Railman how he should affect the nation's public-spending bill and inflation rate."

The passengers grumbled off the platform, some to board Bertie the Deregulated Bus and most to their cars.

"You see," Thomas told Bertie. "We've got such strong support behind us we're holding the country to ransom."

After a few days of strike Thomas was eager to return to his morning service. But the station was deserted.

"Morning, Thomas," called Bertie as he lurched into the yard, loaded down with passengers. "I've got strong support behind me today. Take your signalman here for instance."

"Yes," waved the signalman as he climbed aboard. "I thought I'd better pop into town to check whether I can get full unemployment benefit or if I only qualify for..."

"But haven't you heard?" cried Thomas. "There's no strike today. We're doing a normal service."

"Dear, dear," chuckled Bertie, crunching into gear. "This *is* the normal service."

Coming in next week's Mail

An exclusive serialisation of the Book of the Decade!

The *Marianna Faithrup* Story!!

WITH HER long blonde hair, dazzling smile and "come and employ me" eyes, she was the ultimate '90s icon.

Now Marijuana Frostrup tells for the first time the real story behind those headlines that shocked a generation. The first instalment tells of the men in her life:

● How on her very first meeting with Andrew Neill he invited her to come into his newspaper and have a column with him.

● How she "shared" a Mars Bar with John Witherow, who was later to become the legendary editor of the Sunday Times.

● How top TV producer Harry Thompson asked her: "How would you like a quick appearance on my show?"

Marianyone, seen here in 1994 with Carlton TV's notorious Deputy Assistant Factual Programme Editor (London), Sean Wilmott

Poetry Corner

In Memoriam Lord Delfont

So. Farewell
Then Lord
Delfont.

Famous West
End impresario.

You were the brother
Of Lew Grade,
Also a famous impresario.

But your names were
Different.

E.J. Winothribbski (117½)

PORTILLO ROW

That Portillo 10th Anniversary Surprise Party Menu in full

Leaks

— ✻ —

Right Wing of Complete Turkey

— ✻ —

Hundreds of Cabbages

— ✻ —

Selection of Fools (Gooseberry)

— ✻ —

Plus Fireworks including:

Damp squibs
Not-very-sparklers
Bangers-on
Crackers

Sponsors required for the above Party. If you wish to suck up to the man they are tipping to be the next Prime Minister, please send money at once to: Tony Blair, Islington.

400 Years Ago

IN RESPONSE to the threat of invasion by the Spanish Armada, the English government has promised "strong action" immediately.

Its first move has been to arrest Sir Francis Drake, 37, and charge him with the possession of "outsize bowls".

A spokesman for the Government claimed that Sir Francis was gaining an unfair advantage over his opponent by using a bowl that was a sixteenth of an inch in excess of the permitted European standard.

"The Golden Hind" has been impounded and Sir Francis confined to the Tower of London on a diet of bread and tuna fish for the duration of the enquiry.

Talks to end the so-called "Invasion of England" are expected to continue with Spain at junior minister level in the next few weeks.

On Other Pages

Sedan chair strike continues .Sir Robert de Horton promises 30% coverage...

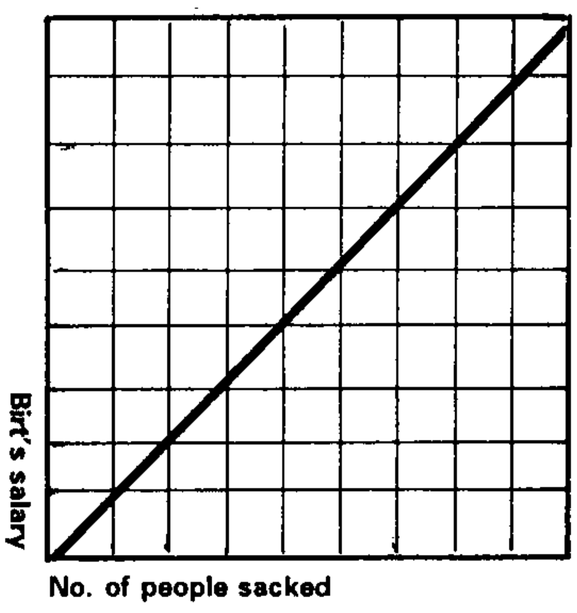
RATINGS

NEW BARB FIGURES SHOW BBC INCREASE

by The Guardian's
Peter Fiddick

JOHN BIRT has topped the BBC charts with a very healthy new figure of £250,000 per annum. This keeps him in the number one position and reflects a general rise amongst BBC management. The average increase for the Board of Directors at the BBC has been an impressive 16%, putting them way ahead of BBC staff who have managed only a disappointing 1.5%.

Birt had been in danger of slipping after a disappointing period when he was caught pretending he was a freelance and was made to join the BBC staff but luckily he recovered by awarding himself a massive performance-related pay rise.



Advert

LAST-MINUTE HOLIDAY BREAKS

NOW ONLY £50

Yes, all you have to do is nick £50 from someone and you too can have the holiday of a lifetime — for nothing!

Go with Social Services Holidays and have a fortnight you'll never forget.

Activities include:

- **Breaking into hotel rooms and nicking even more money.**

NB. The Social Services belong to ABTA (All Bills Taxpayer Assisted).

KINNOCK JOINS EC — TRANSLATORS DEMAND OVERTIME

by Our Man in Brussels **Ian Sprout MP**

TODAY hundreds of simultaneous translators walked out of the EC Commission after their first morning of dealing with a speech by the new £2-million-a-year British Commissioner, Mr Neil Kinnock. A spokesman said: "We have had enough. It is unreasonable to expect anyone to cope with this sort of workload."

WHAT THE DELEGATES HEARD

FRENCH

Mesdames, Messieurs, je suis totallement et absolument et totallement absolument enchanté d'être ici à Brussels. Mon enchantement est totalle, absolut et absolument totallement absolut, etcétéra...

GERMAN

Mein Herren und Damen, ich bin totallich und utterlich und utterlich and totallich gemütlichfahrenweisenwöllen grübbenoberdermoon... vorsprung durch technik... (etcetera)

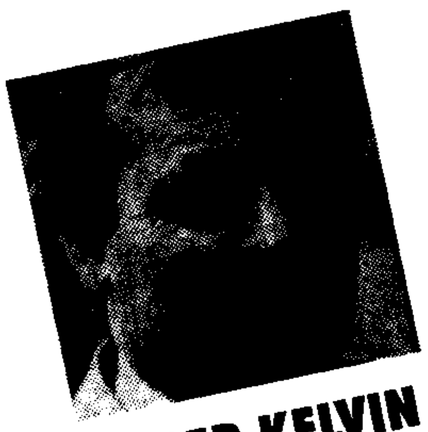
ITALIAN

Signori, Signorini, sono totallimenti y absolutimenti contenti essare Comissione di Europeani quattro formagio multo fribi y sono absolutimenti y totallimenti et absolutimenti totalli... *(continued in 94 other languages)*

NEW SPORT ON SKY!

ALL-IN SACKING

TONIGHT



KILLER KELVIN THE WAPPING WONDERBOY

CHAINSAW CHISHOLM THE KILLER KIWI

Can the Wapping Wonderboy, famous for his dirty tricks and foulmouthed repartee, go the full three months with the Killer Kiwi, also famous for his dirty tricks and foulmouthed repartee?

Answer: No he can't.

Referee: R. Murdoch Commentator: R. Littlejohn Rules: None

The Alternative Rocky Horror Service Book

No. 94: Service Of Caring And Sharing For An Incumbent Deprived Of His Living By A Reactionary Bishop On The Grounds Of His Sincerely Held Non-Belief In The Deity.

President: We are gathered here in the presence of No One At All, remembering that when two or three are gathered together nothing much happens.

All: That's the way we see it.

President: We would like to give thanks to ourselves at this time for the work of thy servant N or M (as it may be, Kevin or Tracy). He or she has faithfully served this community, forming pastoral relationships on a one-to-one basis at all levels.

All: The Karaoke Evening/pub quiz/Summer Fayre was a great success.

President: We shall now join together in the words of the Non-Credo.

All: We do not believe in God in the sense of a sort-of Father Christmas figure sitting on a cloud, but more of a sort of Life Force thingie, like the Buddhists. Did you see that programme on the Paranormal, makes you think, doesn't it? Amen.

HYMN (No. 94)

"God moves in a mysterious way. In fact He doesn't move at all."

The President shall then ask the congregation to join with him in a General Commination of the Bishop.

President: Our Father who isn't in heaven, but if you were we feel sure you would send this bigoted Bishop to Hell, which doesn't exist, obviously, but if it did, then this would be the place where this bastard should go for sacking Kevin (or he may say Mariella) when his only crime was to be honest enough to say what most of us vicars think, i.e. that there is nothing out there.

All: For God's sake, this is the twentieth century.

President: *(addressing the ex-incumbent):* Did you get many letters of support?

Keith: Yea, even an hundredfold.

President: Have you been on the media?

Keith: Indeed I hath. *South Today* and *Good Morning Chichester.*

All: And there was a letter in the *Independent.*

The choir shall then sing an Anthem: "I know that my Redeemer doesn't liveth".

THE DISMISSAL

President: The Lord isn't with you.

All: And He isn't with you either.

President: Go in peace.

All: And get another job.

Keith: Yes I have already been offered a part in the Government's Multi-Faith Education Programme.

All: Great. Thank God for that.

© Society For The Prevention of Christian Knowledge

Alan Coren

My Holiday in Provence

IF I may bend your proverbial shell-like for a minute or twain as you toil to your place of employment (or indeed don't, if Comrade Knapp and his merry signalpersons are still up to their old tricks), let me reconstruct for you recent events here Chez Coren, in the sun-drenched Provencal hamlet of Crique-le-Bois, where last Tuesday afternoon, to be precise, yours truly was rudely awakened from his siesta (or however our Gallic Cousins terms this invaluable institution) by the warbling of his trusty fax machine, which promptly proceeded painstakingly to extrude a message from our esteemed editor, Mr Stothard no less, reading "Where's your copy, Coren?".

At once my brain was a whirl with a coruscating stream of brilliant notions to delight my readers in distant Blighty. For instance, the bizarre episode of the game of boules and the chocolate-flavoured condom which *(continues for several hundred words in similar vein).*

On Other Pages

Victoria Coren on "The Day My A-Level Results Came Through"

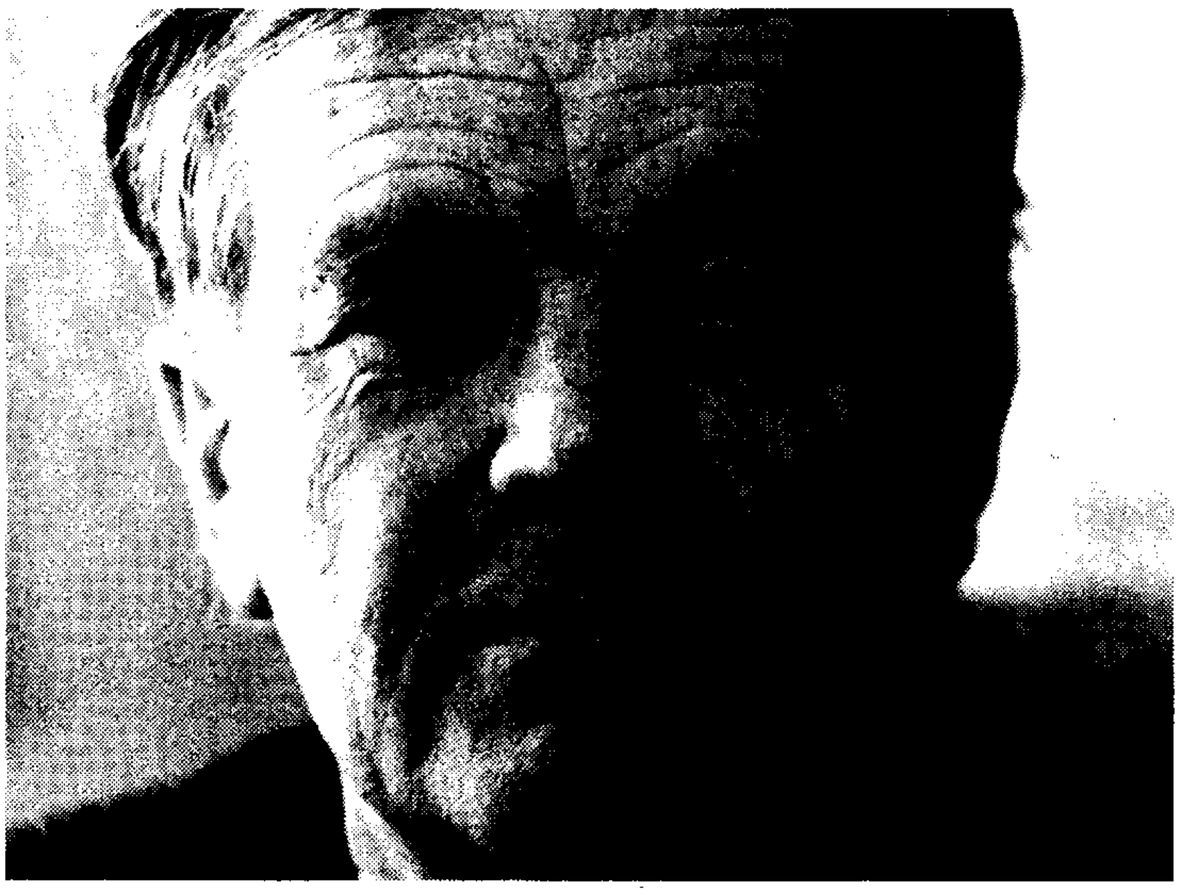
Giles Coren on "The Day My Job on the Times Came Through"

Great Bores Of Today.

"... they still really are the world's number one rock 'n' roll band they've seen them all off over the years who remembers the Swinging Blue Jeans? the Troggs? the Mojos? no one... but the Stones go on and on magic what Keith and Mick have put down on vinyl is now enshrined in rock history everyone knows all the words to *Satisfaction* or *Honky Tonk Women* they are more than classics and when they play them live it all comes flooding back you think what's happened in the last 30 years the Berlin Wall has come down apartheid has ended the ozone layer has you know but Mick and the boys are still there the minute he walks on stage you know you are in the presence of an icon a demi-god almost no one today can match him no wonder the kids your age go wild Karen and I were sitting near the front wonderful seats we could see all the lines on his face and to be honest he's very thin almost like a monkey and you have to ask yourself whether there isn't something a bit strange for a man his age to be dancing around like a teenager it's ridiculous it's almost sad I felt sorry for him you don't eat meat do you? there's a green pepper here somewhere..."

SO YOU GOT SENT A LETTER BOMB THIS MORNING?
YEAH. ONLY A SMALL ONE BUT STILL PRETTY SCARY.
WOGAN AND A FEW OTHER NAMES HAVE HAD THEM RECENTLY APPARENTLY.
IT'S A CRAZY OLD WORLD WE LIVE IN, GARY.
TELLING ME, MATE. THERE'S SOME OUT AND OUT NUTTERS OUT THERE. WHAT IS GOING THROUGH THEIR HEADS WHEN THEY DECIDE TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
I MEAN, DO THEY SERIOUSLY IMAGINE WE OPEN OUR OWN MAIL?
SAD REALLY, ISN'T IT?

HOW LUCAN COULD LOOK NOW



by the man who has spent forty years tracking down the missing Earl, Inspector 'Knacker of the Yard' Knacker

I HAVE searched the five corners of the globe, writes James Hughes-Onslow on behalf of Inspector Knacker.

You name it, I have been there — Bali, Mauritius, Antigua, the red light district of Bangkok — all following the trail of the world's most wanted man, the 89th Earl of Lucan, or Lord "Lucky" Lucan, as he was known to his gambling cronies at the famous Clermont Club in the heart of London's London *(Get on with it. Ed.)*

James Goldsmith

It seems only yesterday that I was lying on the beach at Acapulco *(shurely 'that Lord Lucan fled these shores, never to be seen again'? Ed)*.

Some said he had killed himself, but my hunch as a policeman and best-selling author told me that he was still very much alive.

It was when I was lying on another beach in faraway Costa Rica that I met a traveller from an antique land who told me that he had met a man in a bar in Nairobi who knew another man who swore that he had seen Lucan drinking with Chief Buthelezi and Robert Maxwell in a hotel in the back streets of Rangoon in 1983.

Sir Jams Fishfinger

Before the week was out I was in Rangoon and there in the register of the Hotel Ramada was the giveaway entry: "Earl J. Bostik, 1379 Chappaquidick Drive, New Dworkin, Arkansas. The Fish Soup was unforgettable. If you're ever over our way, do look us up! Earl and Eva Bostik."

Earl! This was the clue that I had been looking for. And there it was. A typical Lucan ploy to try and cover his tracks.

Needless to say, by the next morning I was in Arkansas banging on the door of the Bostiks' duplex in leafy downtown New Dworkin.

After interrogating the couple for over a month, I was forced to conclude that Earl J. Bostik was *not* Lord Lucan.

For a start, he had a heavy German accent and a picture of Hitler over his mantelpiece, signed "To mein alte Freund, Martin Boorman. Zein Führer, Adolf".

The trail had gone cold once more.

TOMORROW

Inspector Knacker flies to Brazil to check out the nightlife (shurely 'the mysterious stranger who checked in at Harry's Bar calling himself Michael Winner? Ed).

"I can't, I promised Mum and Dad they could come down at the weekend"

This Week's Honorary Degrees

MR WINSTON SILCOTT, 35, seen here receiving an Honorary Doctorate in Civil Law from the University of Calcutt (formerly Gatwick Polytechnic).

He is pictured with the writer and broadcaster Ms Mariella Frostrup, who was made a Doctor of Letters for her contribution to literature.

SUPERMODELS

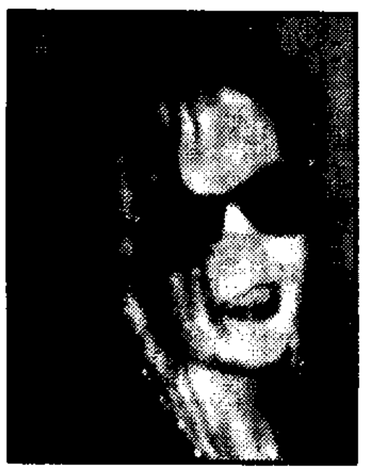
Neil Kerber

WHAT WAS IT LIKE MAKING A FILM ELLE?
LET ME TELL YOU, ACTING ISN'T AS EASY AS IT SEEMS,
YOU'VE GOT TO BE TALENTED AND VERSATILE,
AND YOU REALLY HAVE TO PUT YOURSELF INTO THE ROLE.
FORTUNATELY THEY JUST NEEDED SOMEONE TO GET THEIR KIT OFF!
Kerber

"Oh no! Cave-Painting Nasties!"

The Royal Dynasty of Pop

Wedding Of The Century



How They Are Related

Mary-Lou Presley

King Elvis the Pelvis of Graceland

Queen Priscilla Presley of Dallas

Rev John Presley

Rev Ian Presley

Rev Presley Baxendale QC

5 Million Kids Called Elvis Born In 1958

Elvis Costello

Abbott and Costello

Dianne Abbott

Michael Jackson

Peter Pan of Neverland

Pan's People

Rev Jesse Jackson

General Stonewall Jackson

Princess Michael of Jackson

Radio Jackson Five Live

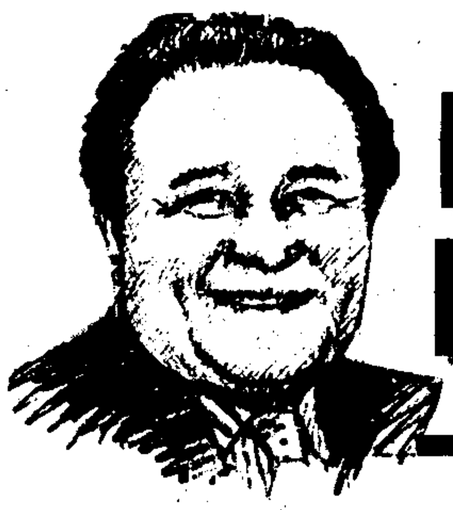
Jackson and the Beanstalk

Jackson and the Moonwalk

Mariella Frostrup
(shurely shome mishtake?)

That Wedding Menu in full

Jailhouse Rock Salmon Served On A Bed Of Young Boys
(shurely 'Lettuce'? Ed)



PETER McLIE

The Return of the World's Worst Columnist

ISN'T IT time the Labour Party found a new leader? We're all sick and tired of the old Welsh windbag bleating on. No wonder Mrs Thatcher is still in Downing Street if Neil Kinnock is all she has to contend with.

They should sack no-good Neil and replace him with a bonny Scotsman with a good head for figures.

Step forward Mrs Margaret Beckett!

● *What happened to the good old British summer?*

When I was a wee bairn the sun shone down from cloudless blue skies, as we feasted on strawberries and haggis on the golden sands of Auchtermuchty.

But this summer, the experts tell me, has been the coldest and wettest on record.

No wonder my friend A.N. Wilson has taken to bicycling around in a long woolly scarf and galoshes!

I HAVE recently discovered an extraordinary thing.

If you get in your car and drive far enough in one direction, you will eventually come to a huge stretch of water.

I have even thought of a name for it — the trouser press.

NEW WORDS

with Philip Howard

JAGGER
vb. int. To dance about in an exhibitionistic fashion when far too old. E.g. "Please stop jaggering, Dad, it's embarrassing." (*Adrian Mole's Guide To Provence*, **1994**)

KNAPP
n. Scots vernacular. To spend the day asleep in the garden instead of going to work. E.g. "I think I'll have a knapp this Wednesday, dear."

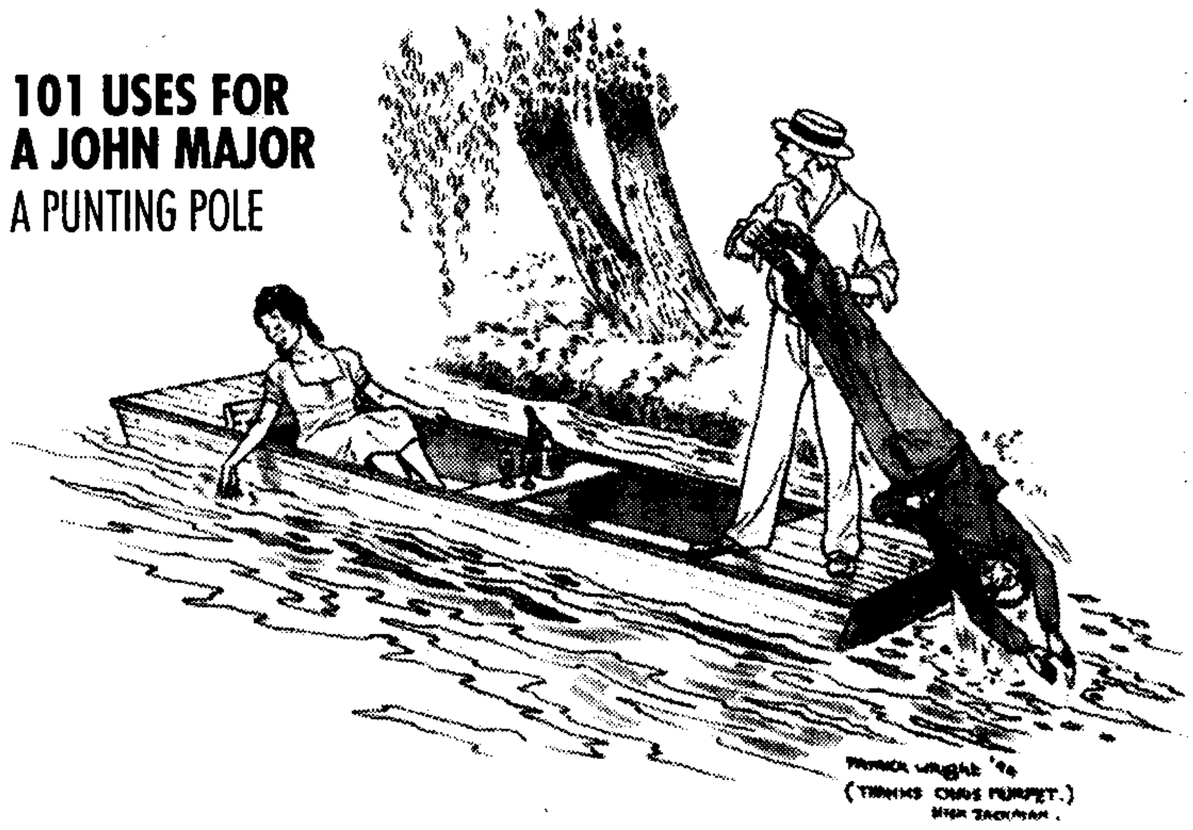
LITTLEJOHN
n. Cockney slang. One who affects manner and opinions of a London cab-driver to make money. E.g. "Did you see that littlejohn on TV last night? I agree with him about those lesbians." (LBC Phone-In, 1994)

HURLEY
n. Woman who impulsively undresses in public. E.g. "What a shameless hurley — doon tae her knockers again *(surely 'knickers'? Ed.)*." (*The New Dr Finlay's Casebook*, **1995**)

FROSTRUP
n. Fictitious woman made up by satirical magazine in order to fill pages.

101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR

A PUNTING POLE



DIARY

MARIANNE FAITHFULL

Give me a break. It really pisses me off. After the drugs bust and all the publicity surrounding it, I was stuck for years with this ridiculous rock-star-moll image, invented by the gutter press and the cops and the establishment purely to discredit me and my generation and all the changes we wanted in society.

"You know something, Keith, it really pisses me off, this rock-star-moll image I've been saddled with," I said to Keith when we were lying in bed one day.

"Yeah," he replied, sympathetically, and then he said: "Hang on, it's quarter past. It's Mick's turn."

Mick was great. Lying in bed with him seemed to put things in perspective. "You know something, Mick," I said. "It really pisses me off, this rock-star-moll image I've been saddled with. And the Establishment's always trying to make out that we're all on drugs."

"Don't blaggard the spliff, babe," said Mick. Then a look of agitation came over his face. "Hang on," he said. "There's something bumpy at the bottom of the bed — go an' see what it is, babe, be a doll."

So I gave Mick the spliff and made my way through the sheets to the bottom of the bed. On the way down, who should I meet but Brian Jones with his familiar hangdog expression. "What you doing here, Brian?" I said.

"I'm forming an orderly queue, Marianne", he replied. It was then that I noticed a couple of Small Faces, a Trogg and three or four Swinging Blue Jeans behind him, plus their roadie, carrying a catering pack of Mars Bars.

"Hands up which of you has read Rimbaud recently," I said. This was the way things happened in the Sixties. You'd talk about what books you'd read and if you found you were on the same astral plain you'd go to bed together.

The whole lot of them put their hands up. "So what did Rimbaud write then?" I asked the Swinging Blue Jeans.

There was a silence, then their drummer said: "Tintin in Tibet, wasn't it?"

At this point, I could sense that at the top of the bed Mick was beginning to get restless. "What's happenin' down there, Marianne?" he said.

"Nothing, Mick," I replied. Mick could get obsessively jealous, and I didn't want anyone to come between us, even the Swinging Blue Jeans. But when I made my way back to the top of the bed, I caught him snogging with Anita, and sorting things out with his accountants. But this was the Sixties, and in those heady days, everyone snogged with Anita and sorted things out with their accountant, so it was all cool.

Keith was gorgeous in those days. Totally gorgeous. For years, he was the epitome of my idea of the Byronic soul, so beautiful and pure. I suppose I first realised how beautiful he was when I first saw him opening a tin of Baked Beans using just his tongue. But I hardly ever saw him put any food in his mouth. When the tin was open, he'd put the baked beans, one by one, up his nose. "That way I don't need to clean my teeth more than once a year," he explained. The accumulation of food in his nose probably gave Keith his famous moody, tortured look. Once we had Keith, Brian and Anita over to drop acid and we all sat round the ceiling in our furs, satins and velvets and talked about the fantastic things we would do with the kingdom if only we could, and how we would run the world. Actually, I say we sat round the ceiling, but five hours later and after a lot of thought it turned out to be the floor.

Brian was very much the philosopher of the group, an avid reader who'd read almost all the first chapter of Lord of the Rings. As a result, he'd thought very, very deeply about a whole lot of things. "You can't hold a lot of water in an egg-cup," he announced, and we all thought and thought for a long time and nodded our heads. "I mean, the only water you can hold in an egg-cup is, well, about the size of an egg-cup I suppose. Certainly not bigger, or not much." "Right, right," we all said together.

"If you want to go to the moon, you'll never find it at the bottom of the ocean 'cos the moon is in the sky..." he continued, an hour and a half later. "Never eat a hedgehog if your mouth is made out of balloon... A dead cat will never bark... Green is not yellow but orange is almost yellow, especially if you paint it all over with yellow paint."

Slowly but surely, we were working out a whole philosophy for the way our generation would run the planet. Mick even developed a five point plan of government. "Like, first," said Mick, "I'd clean up your downstairs toilet, Brian." Mick was always very fastidious. "Like, I mean, what's that dead chicken doin' in there for starters? If I was King or President or whatever, I'd say no one's allowed to keep dead chickens in their lavvies without my written permission, right?"

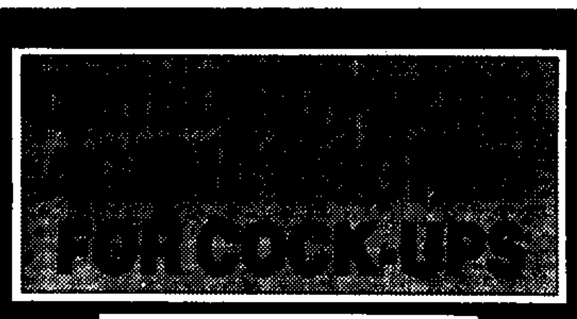
And so we would go on, setting the world to rights until the early hours of the morning. At about 3am, Mick would say, "Right, let's really start to do something about the world, then," and we'd all try and get to our feet, but we'd just wobble over and lie on our backs, or fall head first into a bean-bag, so we never really got round to it, which really pissed us all off, like it was an establishment conspiracy to keep us away from doing all that good.

There was a constant parade of visitors to the house in Chester Square so we bought another house in Cheyne Walk, and when that began to fill up we moved to Eaton Square. So we had three houses, all full of heads and freaks, but Mick hated untidiness, so he said we had to move anyone who wasn't still breathing out of the upstairs bathroom and into the basement.

At this time, I was secretly involved with Spanish Tony who didn't realise I was also intimately attached to Japanese Frank, who had no idea I was having a passionate affair with Nicol Williamson, from whom I kept my on-off relationship with Arthur Askey a firm secret, as I was worried that if he found out he would tell Moroccan Herbert, who was intensely jealous of Freddie and the Dreamers, with whom I was beginning to grow heavily involved, and I was at all costs determined to preserve my dignity.

Once, I'd smoked so much hash that I was feeling a bit catatonic and I suddenly had this nightmare vision of us all thirty years on, still doing exactly the same things, freaking out and jamming and schlepping and getting our rocks off but now, like, *old*, with the Stones still touring and me still feeling really out of it, and the whole Sixties thing still dragging on, and us all selling our stories to the *Daily Mail* in return for dough, regardless of our reputations. I mean, thank god it was only a nightmare, you know?

"How come when he does that it's flirting, but when I do it it's harassment?"



Majorca Daily Bulletin

LARGE BLACK BAG of babies 0-6 months £8 — Tel 565 2062

Birmingham Evening Mail

In the latest edition of *Scouting*, Mr Morrison urges that Britain's boy and girl Scouts should not take their movement's motto "Be prepared" as an excuse to take contraceptives to the World Jamboree in The Netherlands next year.

The Times

Literary Review

PM tease

Major Major — Memories of an Older Brother
Terry Major-Ball,
with an introduction by
James Hughes-Onslow
(Duckworth, £12.95)

IT'S not often that a book reviewer has the intoxicating sensation of discovering an unquestionable classic. Many probably never experience that wild rapture.

Yet the moment it happens, you know instinctively that this is the real thing.

Major Major is just such a book. It makes you proud to be English. No foreigner could dream of such a masterpiece. It is one of the most distinctive products of our great civilisation, up there with Durham cathedral, the Elgar cello concerto, Adnam's bitter and the double-decker bus. When John Major has been quite forgotten, this book will, if there is any justice, be shelved between *The Young Visiters* and *The Diary of a Nobody*.

It is, quite simply, one of the greatest examples of unconscious humour ever published. Surely not. Whoever is responsible for having helped Mr Major-Ball preserve the delicate flower of his idiocy between hard covers, with its heady perfume quite unimpaired and the colours gleaming so brightly, deserves our deepest gratitude.

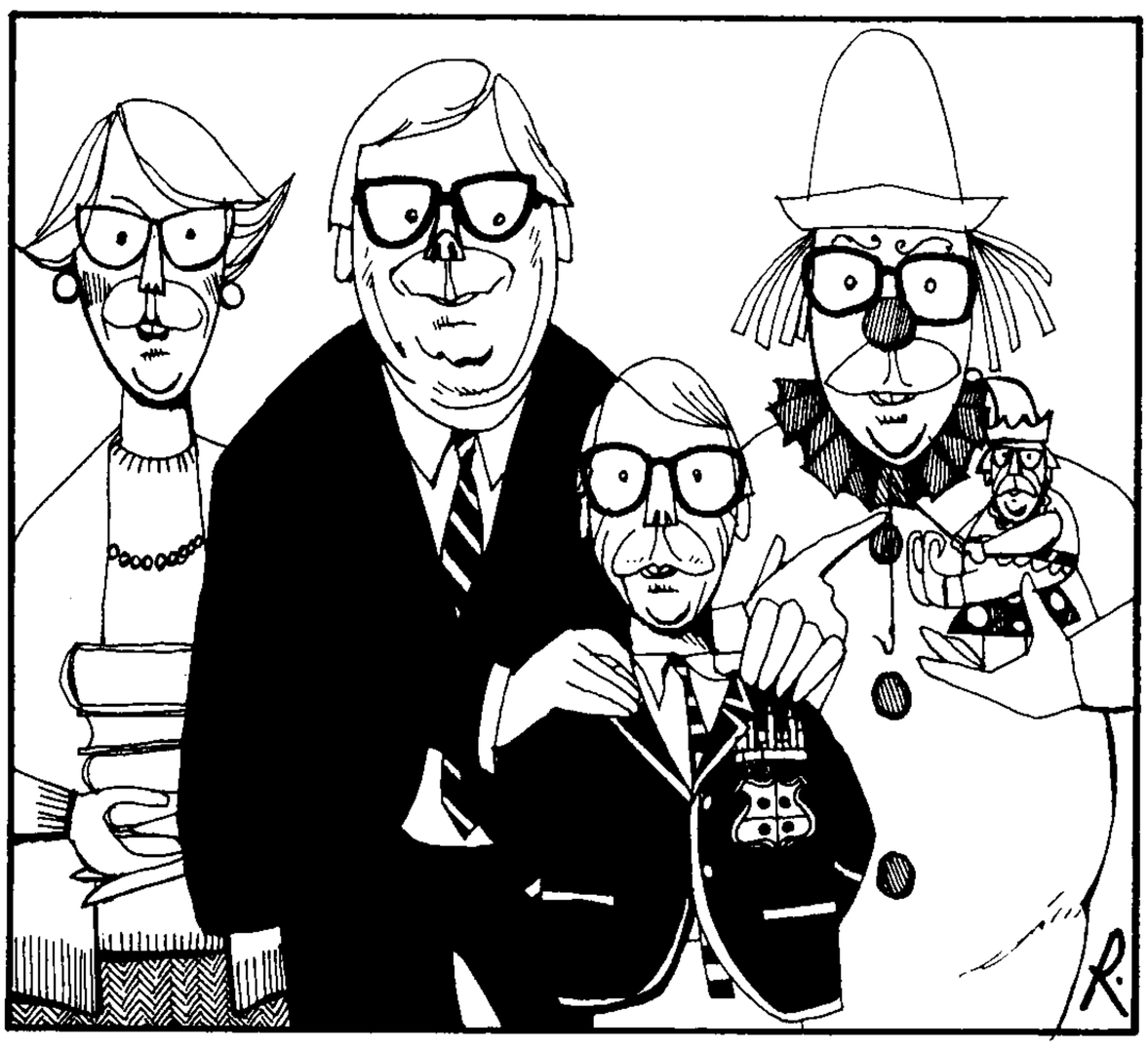
If it is, as I suspect, Terry's chum, James Hughes-Onslow, then he stands revealed as one of the boldest avant-gardists of our time. Anything Damien Hirst may have done to a sheep has nothing on what Hughes-Onslow has certainly done to Terry Major-Ball.

The sheer technique takes the breath away. There is not a false note from beginning to end. Right from the acknowledgments — "First I must thank my wife Shirley for putting up with me researching and writing this book and answering the enquiries of journalists when in her view there were more important jobs to be done around the house" — you know you are in safe hands.

At times Terry Major-Ball almost seems to guess his own secret. When he has talked to journalists in the past, "I have heard the odd yawn at the other end of the line", he admits. Once, he exclaims, a journalist interviewed him for two hours but never printed anything. "Two hours, what a waste! I could have painted a door in that time."

Even his younger brother nowadays "can be very difficult to get hold of because of work", he finds. Why, when he tried to tell him about his trip to America, John Major said: "Sorry, Terry, I must go now. I'm due at a meeting in the cabinet room." Terry thinks he understands: "As he left his flat to go downstairs, I thought once again how very little time for relaxation there is in the busy life of a prime minister."

Even through Terry Major-Ball's fabulously inobservant eyes, there are some priceless revelations here about John Major and the family.



Their father, Tom Ball, who took the stage-name "Major", was indeed a trapeze artist before becoming a garden gnome manufacturer. Their mother was a music-hall performer whose most famous act was called "Tarzan's Wooing".

Terry Major-Ball is 11 years older than John Major, whose arrival came as a complete surprise to their 64-year-old father: "Father didn't know of the coming birth until some time after the conception whereas my mother did, because she had secretly planned it." Cunning!

Then there are a few telling glimpses of the young John Major. As a young man, his hobby was recording *Top of the Pops* as best he could. "In those days we recorded through a microphone rather than through a direct lead, so there was always a problem of what to do with Mother's budgie. This was a musical bird which would sing along with the music when John was trying to record. He tried covering the cage with a cloth and moving it to another room, but most of John's recordings still ended up with an additional unwanted artist on them." In a sense, of course, he has suffered many comparable frustrations in his political career.

But John Major has always been resolute in the face of misfortune, we learn. When he was convalescing at home after his car crash in Africa, there was "a practical problem. Because he couldn't bend his leg, he couldn't get up to the upstairs lavatory, and if he used the outside loo his outstretched leg prevented the door from closing. So he went and finished his convalescence in a quieter place with friends."

Lately there has been all that cruel mockery by the likes of Charles Moore — "How would Charles Moore fare on the trapeze, I wonder," asks Terry indignantly — and Paul Johnson. "It must be terribly frustrating for Mr Johnson that time has moved on, so that we now have a prime minister who doesn't listen to him any more," Terry says compassionately. "After a lifetime of vacillation he must feel all washed up, rather as I did when the garden ornaments business collapsed."

But the real hero of his tale is himself, naturally. We get it all here, no holds barred, from his passion for the Bognor Butlins, where he is able to indulge his talent for wildlife photography — "I creep around the trees, with my camera at the ready, trying to get a good photograph of the squirrels or ducks" — to his first trip in an aeroplane, courtesy of the *Evening Standard* — "The inside of the first-class compartment looked remarkably like the InterCity trains I have seen at Victoria Station, spacious and comfortable-looking, not that I have ever been on an InterCity train — yet."

Then there is his DIY. At John Major's wedding, he discloses, he painted the bridesmaids' shoes to match their outfits (navy-and-green). "This is where Terry comes in handy — busy with a paintbrush," he boasts with understandable pride. That's one up on Mr Pooter.

Tying the whole thing together is his care and concern for his stomach. After giving his recipe for a microwaved egg, he adds regretfully: "The truth is that for most of my life food has taken second place to work." Even now, he cannot let himself go as he would like, it seems. "My waistline has suffered since I started researching and writing this book. An author's life is a sedentary one, compared with a garden ornament manufacturer's, and I don't think I've made the necessary adjustment to my diet."

Let us hope he is not deterred. A second book of this quality would constitute a renaissance in English letters. If only his younger, so much less talented brother can hang on in there!

Books & Bookmen

■ *WHY has Carmen Callil not signed the contract for Picador to commission her memoirs for the agreed advance of £80,000? Because she insisted the agreement carry a clause to the effect that it was conditional upon her editor, Peter "Eeyore" Strauss, remaining in place.*

This cult of the personality was too much for "Eeyore's" superiors to stomach, and as a result the Virago will probably have to seek another publisher.

☐ IT'S A relief that John "Gold Blend" Saddler has found another berth after his embarrassing, shortlived time at trendy, *Grauniad*-sponsored publishers 4th Estate.

Managing director Victoria Barnsley hired the boy wonder after Transworld let him go but neglected to tell her colleagues in the small publishing house. So pissed off were they at not having been consulted, or even told when Saddler was starting, that they pretended not to know who the poor chap was when he arrived.

No one spoke to him all morning. In desperation, at midday he went into Queen Victoria's office and insisted she take him to lunch. Gritting her teeth, she did so — and then didn't address a word to him for weeks. It was a relief when he was offered Jonathan Warner's old job at HarperCollins after Cape's Robin Robertson turned it down.

'Bookworm'

footnotes

THE COOK, THE HOAX, THE STING — AND THE CENSOR

NOTHING is more precious to Roger Cook, celebrated TV investigator, than his reputation for fearlessness.

Yet Fearless Roger has had nothing public to say about the astonishing censorship by Central Television of the best programme he never made.

Like many politicians and Westminster lobbyists, he is on holiday hoping there will be no further fuss over a remarkable programme about Ian Greer Associates, parliamentary lobbyists, which was set up by the Cook team for Central TV; lavishly funded for several weeks; and then, at the very *coup de grace,* abruptly and inexplicably abandoned.

The idea for the programme came from an article by David Henke in the *Guardian* last October about the famous parliamentary lobbyist Ian Greer. Henke was taken on as a consultant. He and the Cook team, led by researcher Sylvia Jones, spent three months investigating Ian Greer Associates. They planned their programme after observing that:

- Ian Greer's extensive lobbying organisation is staffed almost exclusively by men;
- The Greer team has a preference for ostentatious and wealthy projects;
- Greer's influence ran deep and wide in the Tory party, and in the government where he was said to have influence with the prime minister, Michael Portillo and Neil Hamilton, the minister for trade.

The Cook team's plans were laid carefully with no expense spared. A bogus company was set up in Delaware in the United States. Two men, one middle-aged and white, the other (an actor) young, black and handsome, were hired to pose as international businessmen.

Their story, concocted by Cook's researchers, was that they had access to art treasures smuggled out of Russia after the collapse of Communism and needed a British conduit for the proceeds of the art sales. For this they planned to set up a British company which would need political clout. They also wanted to buy a newly-privatised operation which would help them gather information about British business. They targeted the Insolvency Agency at the department of trade.

Who is Sylvia?

Carefully briefed with this fantastic story, the two "businessmen" approached Sir Michael Grylls, a senior Tory MP who lists in his long entry in the MPs register of interests that Ian Greer Associates is one of his clients. Grylls saw the two imposters in his room in the Commons, listened excitedly to their story and at once indicated he had "just the people for you": Ian Greer and his team.

Two days after the Grylls meeting, Greer representatives were ushered into a luxury flat at 55 Park Lane, hired with phones, faxes and computers by Central Television as the "London base" of the new company. The two "businessmen" were there to greet them. The guests were cheerfully served coffee by a "secretary": Central TV's Sylvia Jones.

Three days later Greer himself appeared. He was immediately excited by the bizarre two-man team and their ridiculous story. He quickly offered to provide everything they needed in the way of political clout. When the imposters prevaricated, asking what Greer could do for them which they couldn't find in any cuttings library, Greer insisted his political contacts were second to none. He promised access to Neil Hamilton and to the parliamentary private secretaries of Michael Portillo and the prime minister.

ONE KNIGHT AND HIS CLIENT: Sir Michael Grylls and Ian Greer

At one stage Greer's managing director Jeremy Sweeney boasted that Greers had won a government contract for the security firm Group 4 — even though Group 4 had not submitted the lowest tender. They had achieved this, he said, "because we knew the managing director". (He was polite enough not to tell the couple what they already knew: that at the time this contract was won, Sir Norman Fowler, chairman of the Tory party, was on the board of Group 4.)

Greer had some grand ideas for the boardroom of the new British company the two men from Park Lane wanted to form. He suggested former chancellor Norman Lamont and former social services secretary John (now Lord) Moore. He assured the sceptical duo he could arrange questions in the House.

If the new company wanted "referees" Greer said he could lay them on, too. He gave the names of four top British companies, among them Thames Water and British Airways. All this he and his aides promised in writing. Letters flooded in to 55 Park Lane from Ian Greer Associates naming their contacts in politics and big business, and promising more help. The enterprising business couple were invited to tea at Greer's flat and to luncheon at his expansive mansion in Richmond.

All these promises, dropped names, invitations and claims were faithfully recorded by the secret Central television cameras installed at Park Lane. The pace at which their plot succeeded astonished even the most optimistic Cook reporters. By the middle of March the team was ready for the final sting: the promised delivery by Greer of his top political contacts to the Park Lane flat. Flushed with its success, the Central TV team even discussed hiring a castle in Spain where it planned to invite the politicians and entertain them at Central TV's expense at a delightful and appropriately recorded freebie.

The team members' enthusiasm, however, was not shared by their superiors. As the "sting" grew closer, so the executives of Central TV grew more nervous. Bob Southgate, the deputy managing director who had controlled the operation from the outset, demanded constant memos and meetings.

Then suddenly without warning the plug was pulled at the end of March. Managing director Andy Allen told the incredulous team the programme was cancelled. Not until later, when the censorship was finally exposed by David Henke in the *Guardian* (unluckily for the impact of the story on the day after John Smith died) did Central TV come up with the lame excuse that the material "did not make a Cook programme". This was true in one sense only -- the programme was not finished. Had it been finished, with the sting accomplished and recorded, it would have made the most dramatic *Cook Report* ever. It might indeed have finally drowned the Major government in its own sleaze. So why was it pulled?

The Carlton Club

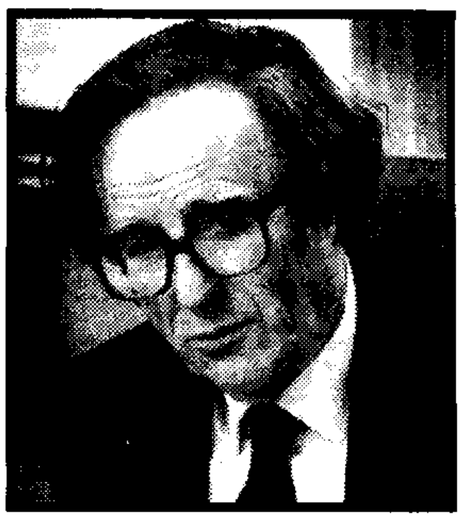
One clue may be the degree to which Ian Greer Associates is involved in commercial television. A spokeswoman for the Network Centre which schedules and promotes all the programmes shown on commercial television, told the *Eye*: "The Centre employs Ian Greer Associates to do straightforward parliamentary monitoring. They don't do any lobbying or extra frills. For example, if there are any select committees like the one on sport that was held recently, then they would pop along on our behalf and notice what was said."

Central Television was taken over earlier this year by Carlton TV. Andy Allen, the man who stopped the controversial *Cook Report*, moved across to become managing director of Carlton/Central. A spokeswoman for Carlton television said: "As far as I can tell, there was a point in the autumn of last year I think when Ian Greer Associates provided some information to Carlton TV. I haven't got any definite information about what this was. I think it had something to do with a select committee."

All is not yet lost. Even without the sting and the MPs there is enough on tape and in letters about Ian Greer Associates to make a remarkable programme. Is there anyone left at Central or Carlton who can demand an end to the censorship and order the truncated programme to be made? Or will the new Commons committee investigating MPs commercial interests have the guts to order the tapes and letters to be produced so that the unusual claims made on behalf of their colleagues can be exposed for all to see?

Three Men on a Gravy Train

JIM BUTLER, the new chairman of European Passenger Services, which will run the cross-channel rail link. He is a former senior partner of KPMG Peat Marwick McLintock, which is still celebrating a £2.9 million contract for providing tax advice to the privatised railway.



SIR CHRISTOPHER FOSTER, the new deputy chairman of Railtrack. He is still a senior partner at Coopers & Lybrand, which is still celebrating all sorts of luscious contracts from the privatised railway (see last *Eye* for the latest £2 million contract).

CHRISTOPHER CHOPE, junior minister of transport 1990-92 and prospective Tory candidate for Bournemouth East and Christchurch. He is a consultant to Ernst and Young, which is still celebrating the £680,000 contract it won for advising on new information systems for the privatised railway.

BA BA BACKTRACK

CHARMING: Mervyn Walker

THERE has been a remarkable U-turn in the attitude of top brass at British Airways to former policeman John Gorman.

If you asked BA about Mr Gorman a few weeks ago, you were told off the record that he was a pain in the neck, not to say a vexatious whinger. The *Eye* was told by a BA spokesman that Gorman's complaints about lost luggage were so frequent as to defy rational statistics. (He reported one loss on British Airways in 26 years travelling).

Now, very suddenly, all is sweetness and light. In the eyes of British Airways bosses, Mr Gorman can do no wrong. This might of course have something to do with the three recent *Eye* articles which told of an extraordinary dirty tricks campaign against Mr Gorman after he had the nerve to complain twice about the state of British Airways food.

The campaign became really nasty when two thugs visited Mr Gorman at home, warned him against any further complaints against British Airways, and sprayed his eyes with mace, seriously threatening his eyesight.

When the *Eye* reported this attack, BA's approach shifted dramatically. On 12 July John Gorman went to the BA shareholders' meeting. No less a person than the managing director, Robert Ayling, sat him down and listened sympathetically to his story. Later, the chairman and chief executive, Sir Colin Marshall, met Gorman, warmly shook his hand, thanked him for attending and promised a full investigation into his complaints. More remarkably still, BA's legal director, Mervyn Walker, invited John Gorman to BA headquarters, gave him lunch and spent four hours carefully and sympathetically examining the whole murky story.

Walker said he took all Gorman's allegations "at face value". He apologised for any rudeness. He accepted that offensive calls had been traced to numbers in Vanguard House, a BA building, though he could not discover who had made the calls. He said that since the allegation was made, "changes had been made to security arrangements".

It was vital, Walker insisted, that BA thoroughly investigate Gorman's allegations. "We want to know," he said, "who is attributing these actions to us. We have to consider whether someone is attacking you and us at the same time. John Gorman is delighted that at last his allegations have been properly considered. On 29 July his lawyers wrote to him with a British Airways offer to settle the complaints about the condom and the glass for £1,000, double what had previously been offered plus a "gagging clause". Not enough, says Gorman, but getting better. A gagging clause, he insists, is "out of the question".

For the wider public the Gorman story, however it ends, has even greater significance. It comes soon after the scandal, of a long dirty tricks campaign by British Airways against its rival, Richard Branson of Virgin. That campaign was masterminded by the former Orange extremist who became public relations boss at BA, David Burnside. Burnside has since left BA with a golden handshake. No one can yet be certain that the BA Dirty Tricks department left with him.

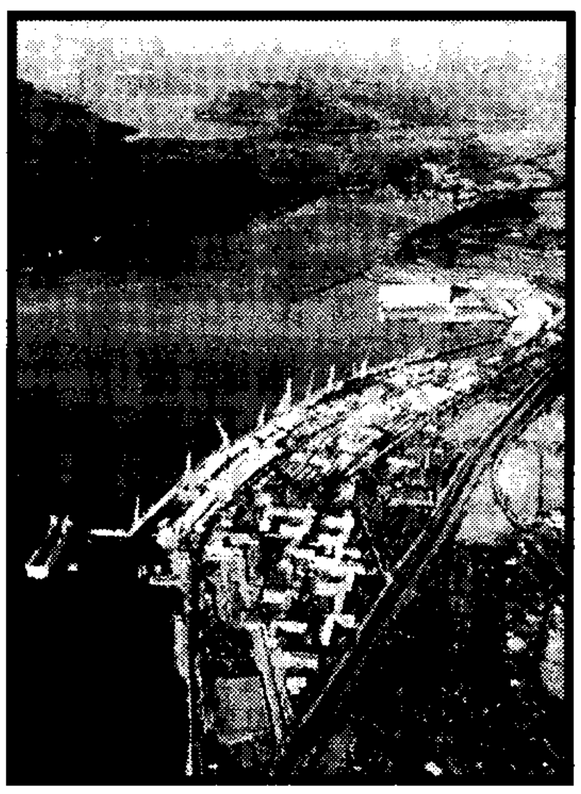
SUB NORMAL

■ CEMENTATION, a subsidiary of Trafalgar House, is most famous for the generous £50,000 consultancy it awarded in 1980 to an unqualified but ambitious young businessman called Mark Thatcher.

The consultancy was in place when Mark's mother, prime minister Margaret Thatcher, negotiated with the Sultan of Oman for a British firm to build the new university in the sultanate. The lucky firm to win the contract was Cementation.

No sooner had the unseemly row about the Oman contract died down than Cementation won the highly-prized government contract to build an enormous shiplift for the Trident base at Faslane in Scotland.

It was an expensive job. The first estimate — in 1984 — was £100 million. Now the national audit office (NAO) reveals that the final cost less than ten years later was £314 million.



By way of a change, the next biggest waste of public money on Trident was in the construction of the Northern Utilities Building. The main contractor here was, well, Cementation. The 1984 estimate for the building was a sizeable £27 million, but after Cementation had been let loose on it for 10 years the cost had rocketed to £110 million. The chief reason was the need to test cables. Only 40,000 cables were needed, but Cementation managed to carry out expensive tests on, er, 150,000.

Wolverhampton Plunderers

■ **In the week that a 200-signature petition from Birmingham pensioners was handed to Downing Street in protest at the loss of pensions in the Teampace scandal (see last *Eye*), another 300 workers in the Black Country find they've lost a hefty slice of their pension, too.**

The long-established industrial clothing firm CMT went bust last year. The receivers discovered:

- The firm had not been paying pension contributions;
- The pension scheme had been lending the firm money;
- Directors John Popplewell and John Wilson were the sole trustees of the fund, and had set up a fund for themselves as well — with themselves as sole trustees.

Touche Ross employed Evershed Pension Trustees, a subsidiary of top Birmingham solicitors, Evershed Wells and Hind, to try to recover the pension money. Eversheds is charging the standard £130 an hour — from the depleted pension fund. It has not yet found out how much money has gone missing.

PS: Nice Mr Popplewell and Mr Wilson both live in the delightful village of Lapworth, where hacks are put off by angry guard dogs.

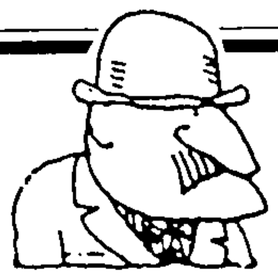
PPS: Dennis Bloomer, a warehouse manager for CMT for 25 years, is in hospital recovering from a massive heart attack which struck him down minutes after he opened his letter telling him his pension was up the spout.

JUST FANCY THAT

(v) **In Oxfordshire, the Guidance confirms that the M40 passes through an area of environmental restraint and is therefore to be regarded as a corridor of movement rather than development.**

Last item in the Report from R. Hood, Principal Planning Officer (Strategic Policy) and C H Caddy, Director of Development & Leisure, VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL. 27 June 1994

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 071 287 3183



In the City

"ARCHER cleared" was the instantaneous and unanimous response to the statement from trade secretary Michael Heseltine about the Anglia TV insider-dealing investigation days after the House of Corruption had closed and MPs were spending more time with their money.

None of the enthusiastic pro-Archer hacks seemed to find it necessary to point out that nowhere in the Department of Timidity & Inaction's statement on the well-timed share tip to Archer's still unidentified friend did the word "cleared" appear. But then similarly missing were such words as "exonerated" and "vindicated" which were quickly wheeled out by Archer and his admirers.

What the DTI statement *actually* said was that a decision had been taken to "take no further action against any of the parties concerned in the investigation". A somewhat different spin. "NFA" decisions are taken for a variety of reasons, only one of which is because there is no case to answer.

Indeed, it would seem the facts of the Anglia investigation were sufficient not just to pass the test required by the Stock Exchange to pass over to the DTI (10 percent of the cases it investigates) and then justify the expense of outside inspectors being appointed (25 to 30 percent of the Stock Exchange cases), but also to merit "independent legal advice" on the inspectors' findings.

For also overlooked in most reports of the DTI statement was that the "NFA" decision had been taken after both in-house and outside legal advice on the inspectors' findings. All somewhat excessive, it might be considered, for such a simple matter involving at most three principals (Anglia TV director Lady Archer; the great author; his elusive Arab friend whom he told to buy the shares) and one 50,000 share deal days before the MAI bid.

But then, as in setting up the inquiry in February after the initial report from the Stock Exchange, no doubt high on the Heseltine agenda was to avoid any suggestion of a cover-up involving the prime minister's close friend. Certainly nobody can accuse the DTI of its usual policy of taking the soft option.

So much so that the DTI statement also revealed "information is being passed to the Stock Exchange and the Securities & Futures Authority where it is relevant to their regulatory responsibilities". Stock market observers assume the DTI was suggesting the regulators might want to examine certain aspects of the behaviour of the brokers that handled the transaction, perhaps over their dealing with Archer's strangely silent friend and in not asking enough questions about him and his account or notifying the authorities once the deal had gone down and £80,000 had been made in a matter of days.

Four years ago, explaining why the DTI appointed inspectors to investigate alleged insider dealing cases, Heseltine's predecessor Nicholas Ridley told MPs: "We do not want to appoint inspectors until we are certain that there is a case to investigate... We would not appoint inspectors... unless there was prima facie sufficient evidence to make it likely that we would find enough to go to a prosecution if an offence had been committed... [We] only investigate those cases where there is some genuine belief that we will find some evidence."

Clearly the inspectors either did not find that an insider-dealing offence had taken place or enough evidence to pass the beyond-a-reasonable-doubt test to justify a prosecution. Archer's fans will point to the former. His enemies will suggest the latter. The truth as to what the inspectors did find will, however, remain an official secret.

ALTHOUGH no decision is expected on the future of the Serious Farce Office before the end of the year, all the signs are that its days in its present form are numbered.

The conclusions of the internal review by treasury man John Graham are now being further reviewed by a senior civil servant from the cabinet office. But it is unlikely — especially after the embarrassment of the 0-4 outcome of the SEIL Trade Finance trial in Liverpool last week — that the SFO will escape the inevitability of absorbtion into the crown prosecution service (CPS) by way of merger with its slimmed down fraud investigation group.

Sources with knowledge of the Graham inquiry suggest that he had concluded such a merger was not only inevitable but wholly justified on grounds of performance and cost. But at the last minute this anti-SFO verdict was watered down and the decision left to the attorney-general Sir Nicholas Lyell. The reason would seem to have been lobbying from the SFO and political concerns about effectively pronouncing the Tories' chosen means to fight City fraud to be a failure after six years and spending approaching £100 million. But the case for a merger within the CPS is considered so overwhelming that it is hard to see what the further review can achieve other than delay.

Meanwhile there are continuing signs of movement within the higher Elm Street echelons suggesting a feeling there that change is on the way.

Maxwell case controller John Tate's move to customs has been blocked until the brothers' trial is under way — now set for January. A fiasco here and the SFO is most certainly history, so Tate has been told he must stay to ensure no pre-trial cock-ups. This may not, however, silence growing internal whisperings about the handling of the case against Kevin and Ian Maxwell.

Fred Coford, the hero of the Roger Levitt plea bargain and similar earlier SFO triumphs, is also on his way out. He is to be seconded to Lloyd's to help the insurance market fight fraud! Lloyd's names can most certainly sleep easier at night — as can insurance fraudsters.

Even director George Staple is said to be contemplating life after the SFO and exploring what he might be doing after next April. As a former City lawyer Staple could always return to the easier and more profitable sphere of issuing writs rather than indictments.

FURTHER embarrassment for the SFO is promised by the threatened return next month from her Northern Cyprus sanctuary of Asil Nadir's chief facilitator Elizabeth Forsyth. She claims it is her intention to return in order to challenge the case against her and by inference against Nadir.

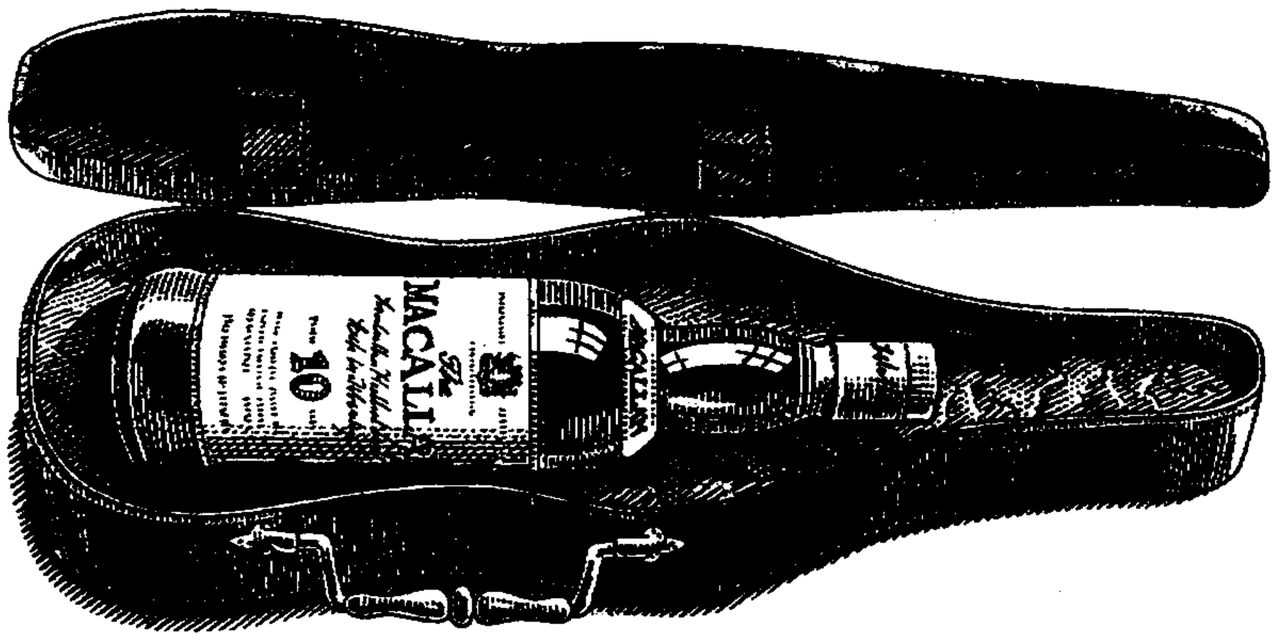
The gambit is obvious. If Forsyth returns and is not charged then — like the dropping of the case against Polly Peck accountant John Turner — there will be further claims that there is no case against Nadir. That could then open the way for the long threatened but still undelivered abuse of process application by Nadir and even his own return to Britain.

A warrant to arrest Forsyth was issued, since when she has not returned to Britain in more than two years. But the warrant is to question, not charge; so the SFO will have to decide, if Forsyth delivers on her promise, what to do when she lands.

The most likely prosecution against Forsyth, and her able aide Jason Davies, was to have been for their role in the Polly Peck share support operation. But with Nadir and Davies out of reach that is considered a non-starter. However, there is still the possibility of Forsyth facing charges relating to up to £400,000 of Polly Peck money misapplied by Nadir. And she could also be faced with a demand for a "section two" interview, which if refused could mean prosecution.

But if Forsyth does return, the SFO will have its bluff called. Right now the word is that it will proceed against Forsyth rather than risk another Nadir farce. But time will tell.

'Slicker'



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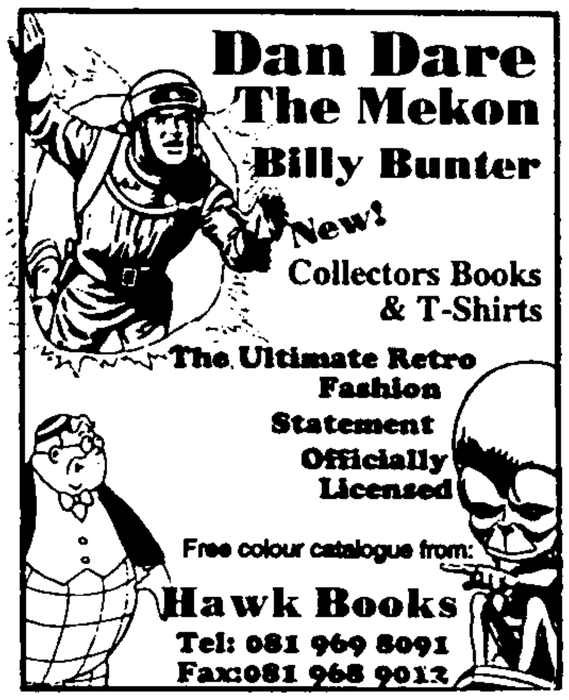

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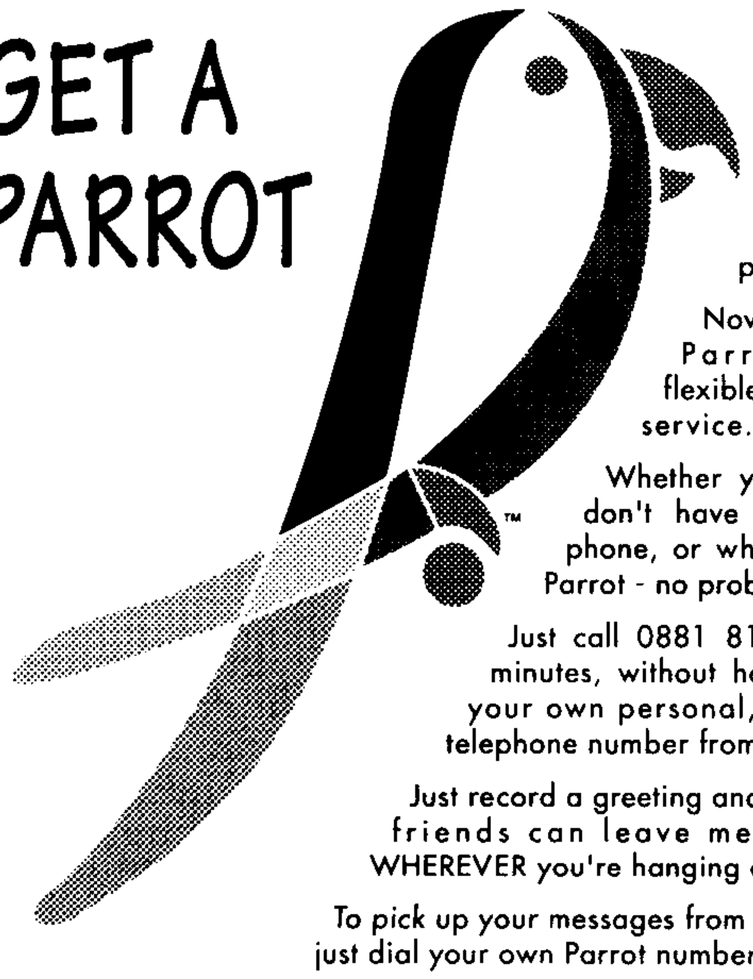

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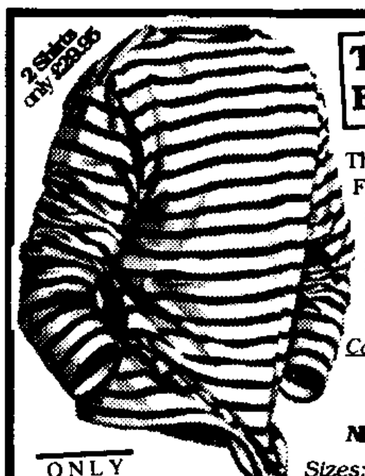

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CAROLE DAWSON, Sunday Times

SPEECH WRITING by Mitch Murray. See page 30.

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GOVERNMENT AUCTION NEWS — 071-928 9001

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RALEIGH VOLUNTEER desperately needs sponsorship. Crazy stunts undertaken. 081-691 4500.

MALE MUSICIAN, 26, slowly going deaf, needs donations to secure future. Box 0752.

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SOCIALIST PARTNERS brings left-wing fish and bicycles together, all ages. Nationwide. SOCIALIST PARTNERS (ref PE), PO Box 276, London SW16 5XL.

NONCONFORMIST, WITTY male, 25, seeks original, sensitive female. Tayside/Anywhere. Just do it! Box 4652.

NOT UGLY, NOT STUPID, not doing much at weekends. Male human being seeks female equivalent. 35, single, gsoh. You might not be, but write anyway. (London.) Box 3852.

MIDLANDS WOMAN seeks man who could make her laugh without telling jokes and tickle her fancy without reading the instructions. Please send photo/letter/pertinent limerick?? Box 3952.

MALE, 38, one previous owner, 6'1", solvent, central London, seeks unattached female 30-45 for long country walks and cuddles! Go on, write! Box 4052.

ATTRACTIVE LAID-BACK male, 32, with loch-side villa seeks hairy amazonian free spirit for uninhibited nights and adventurous days (Scotland). Box 4152.

JOSEPH CONRAD — chinese novelist, young, professional, seeking female friendship. Age 18 to 100. Photo perhaps. Box 4252.

CLASSY, PRETTY, bright lady, 36, equally at home in town or country seeks kind, intelligent and exciting man to settle down with. I'm looking for a good quality life with someone to enjoy my love and love me in return. Box 4352.

YOU HAVE WIT,
money, good manners and passion.
I am petite, attractive, 40s, intelligent.
Where are you?
I am in London.
Box 5552.

WOMAN, MID-THIRTIES, lovely but lonely, seeks man with gentleness, fun and passion to help her regain hers. Photo (preferably of you!) appreciated. Derbyshire/Nottinghamshire. Box 4752.

DEEPLY CARING ENGINEER with own company and Edwardian yacht seeks partner with brains, beauty and love of music to share the fun of the adventures of life in the clear air of the country near the sea. She should be between 30 and 45. Phone or fax 0473 626549.

GENUINELY NICE MAN tired of being used as an emotional prop requires articulate and sexy girl for uncomplicated fun. Box 1351.

ELEGANT, PETITE honey blonde, 30 something — seeks solvent, elite, mature, professional businessman visiting London regularly for champagne afternoon or evening interlude. Box 3551.

TALL, ATTRACTIVE, 39 year old male, athletic and solvent, seeks scintillating and interesting woman to share times together. Devon area. Box 5751.

MAN, 36, PROFESSIONAL seeks feminine lady for uncomplicated affair. Box 1252.

DO YOU HATE talking about interior decoration? Man, 31, into literature, film, food, sex, keeping fit and getting drunk seeks independent solvent woman 24-35 for mutual enjoyment based on appreciation of separative lives. Yorks/anywhere. Photo please. Box 1352.

UNIVERSITY TEACHER, 38, single, seeks attractive professional woman in Northwest area for friendship, romance. My photo for yours. Box 1452.

POOL SIDE PLAYMATE required by charming trainee sugar daddy (50) S/SW. Photo appreciated. Box 2052.

TALL, TENUOUSLY TIED, 40s male seeks amusing, lively, attractive younger female counterpart for discreet cerebral interludes. Box 2152.

SOMETIME PHILOSOPHER, clown and rake. 42, slim, presentable, domesticated (mostly), own rules. Seeks fun, interesting woman. Sense of humour advantageous. Box 2252.

HELP NORTHANTS MEDIC, 27, with vast quantity of Häagen-Dazs to dispose of needs urgent assistance from attractive, intelligent, hungry girl. Photo guarantees spcon. Box 2352.

SENSUOUS TALL GOOD looking late thirties Bath man seeks nymphette to spend lazy Summer days with. If you would like to have some fun times then please write to me with your telephone number to Box 2452.

AMBIDEXTROUS MALE student wishes to correspond with lively, intelligent female who can demonstrate her qualities in writing. Box 2552.

J
MY EROTIC PENFRIEND,
no reply from your Box No.
I have new permanent address.
L still delightful.
W still on?
R. Box 5652.

ATTRACTIVE, independent woman, 43, 5'8", would enjoy life even more with an intelligent, funny (unattached) man. Photo preferred. Box 5252.

SHEFFIELD WOMAN, 36, Scorpio (say no more), needs man mad enough to reply, for fun, friendship, passion. (Dependant cat? No problem.) Box 3152.

ATTRACTIVE TALL professional man, mid forties, seeks companionship/friendship from similar lady 30+ in Surrey, West Sussex/Hants area. Box 3252.

ELEGANT BLONDE lady graduate late 20s seeks professional gentleman, eg doctor/lawyer, 38-48 for permanent friendship. Box 3352.

BLUE-EYED PROFESSIONAL female, 34, seeks handsome, affectionate green-eyed male with preference for black-eyed peas. Ability to enjoy nonsense important. S. Wales. Box 3452.

SHOE/FOOT fetish seeks erotic lady for unhurried fantasy exploration/fulfilment. I'm single, educated, 30s, broadminded, discreet. Photo (returnable) helps, long (scented) letter written wearing (only) silk stockings preferable. Box 3552.

ATTRACTIVE, SMART female, aged 26, searching for caring relationship with sincere gentleman who enjoys adventure with fun. Box 3652.

SUCCESSFUL CO. DIRECTOR, 40, slim, 6', good looking, sensitive and generous. Unhappily married but still with great sense of humour seeks friendship and a little romance with gentle, affectionate girl 20-40, slim, attractive with positive attitude. Box 3752.

TALL, HANDSOME GEEZER, 47, celibate and healthy wants pillion princess for classic bike trip to Jersey. Offshore hairless preferred. Box 4852.

FOOLISH YOUNG MAN, early twenties, seeks older woman to worship and adore. Box 2652.

FED UP WITH the disco/pub drudge? Deserve better? This attractive 25 year old lady does. If you have more than a chat up line please write. You will not be disappointed. Age immaterial. Box 2752.

HANDSOME, PROFESSIONAL married man, 45, seeks broadminded intelligent lady for lascivious pleasure and sensual adventure in Yorkshire/NE and/or London. Strong libido and keen sense of sin a distinct advantage. Box 2852.

LET'S CHEAT! Attractive male, fortyish, involved, bored, seeks interesting older lady, sensual liaisons, non-smoker essential — high heels/stockings optional! Box 2952.

EXPAT OIL ENGINEER, 6ft, dark-haired, slim, solvent, 45, seeks slim lady. Box 3052.

SINGLE BLACK professional, 31, intelligent, fit, GSOH, seeks intelligent, attractive, one-man woman, 23-28. Box 6152.

ATTRACTIVE, TALL, professional man, mid 40s, seeks companionship/friendship from similar lady 30+ in Surrey, West Sussex, Hants area. Box 4952.

ATTRACTIVE, SINGLE, London professional man, 35, seeks well-preserved older woman for weekend fun. Photo please. Box 5052.

UNCONVENTIONAL MALE, 38, dangerous soh, no morals, lives life on the edge, seeks female 20-35, with no commitments for travel, fun, love, laughter. Photo app. Box 5152.

VOLUPTUOUS GREEN-EYED blonde, 30, independent, open, enthusiastic, seeks tactile single male for deep soul searching. Photo exchange S/West. Box 1552.

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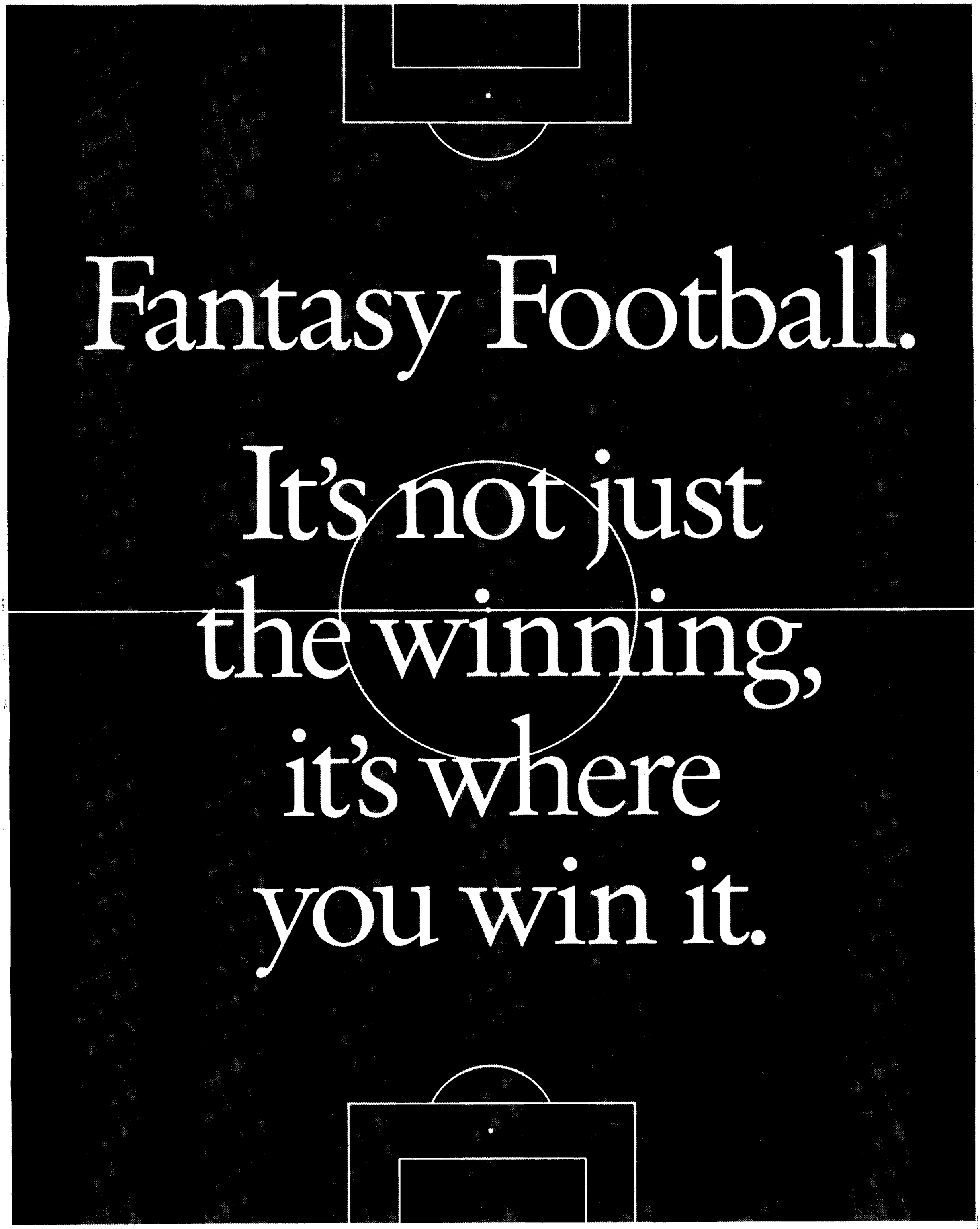

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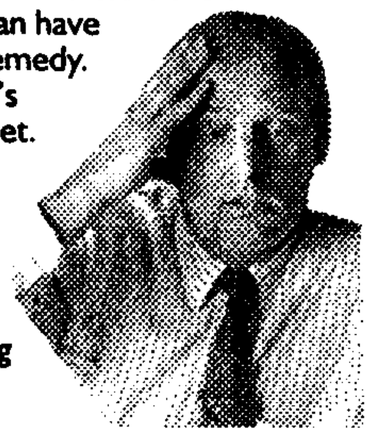

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